



“Excellence in Home Care”

Pain Management Education

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Pain Classification

Pain is the number one reason people visit their physicians. Pain can be classified as acute and chronic. **Acute pain** may be felt suddenly after injury or under these circumstances:

- Following surgery
- Bones fractured/broken
- Childbirth
- Burns and wounds
- Dental work

Medications are generally effective on a short-term basis for these types of pain events. After healing, pain subsides.

Pain that is **chronic** or persistent is ongoing and appears to be permanent. The physical effects of pain may include sore or tense muscles, limited mobility, a lack of energy, and changes in appetite. Emotional effects include depression, anger, anxiety, and fear of re-injury.

Some common chronic pain conditions include:

- Neck and back pain
- Arthritis
- Sprains
- Headaches
- Fibromyalgia

- Cancer or other disease-related issues

Risk Factors

There are a number of risk factors for experiencing chronic pain, including:

- Age (with increased wear and tear on joints or past injuries to joints).
- Previous surgeries.
- Gender (women are more affected than men).
- Family history of diseases such as arthritis.
- Existing conditions such as fibromyalgia or shingles.
- Lack of exercise.

Symptoms

The symptoms of pain can be characterized as sharp and sudden or dull and throbbing depending on your specific condition. Chronic pain symptoms include:

- Pain that doesn't subside after illness or trauma.
- Discomfort with tightness, soreness, or stiffness and general feelings of aching all over.

Sometimes chronic pain symptoms may lead to other maladies such as:

- Stress
- Fatigue
- Weakened immune system



- Depression, anxiety or mood changes
- Lack of motivation

Treatments for Pain

- Interventional procedures
- Medication management
- Physical therapy
- Massage therapy
- Counseling support
- Acupuncture and other alternative therapies
- Hydrotherapy (water)
- Referral to pain specialists

Medications

Your physician may prescribe medications to ease your pain. Many of these have side effects, however, so you'll want to discuss these with him or her and also disclose what over-the-counter medications and herbal supplements you are taking. Some of these may

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interact negatively with what your doctor has prescribed for you. Examples of pain medications are:

- Pain relievers which are classified as analgesics, like acetaminophen or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs): aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen.
- Oral prescription pain medications like hydrocodone combined with NSAIDs, or acetaminophen as well as codeine.
- For severe pain, other prescribed narcotics can be applied to the skin, taken orally or injected. Fentanyl, morphine, and hydromorphone may provide relief.
- Anti-depressants.
- Corticosteroids, such as prednisone which help reduce pain and inflammation.
- Anti-convulsants which help to relieve nerve pain from neuropathy.
- Pain relievers that are applied to the skin such as Lidocaine.
- Steroids: both oral or injectable.



PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

Acute, sudden pain is not always avoidable particularly if you have had surgery or you have received an injury. Chronic pain may not always be preventable—but there are things you can do to cope with pain, such as:

- Stay in good mental health by engaging in biofeedback, yoga or relaxation exercises.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Eat nutritious meals.
- Be active either by walking or other physical activities prescribed by your doctor.
- Make sure you are up-to-date with all of your checkups.

Bethany HomeHealth Can Help

Pain following surgery or from chronic conditions like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, or cancer can be debilitating. Our skilled nurses help patients manage their pain in the comfort of their own homes through:

- Treatment assessment.
- Screening to help prevent secondary problems such as stiff joints or pressure ulcers.
- Medication management.
- Coping strategies.

Physical and occupational therapists provide:

- Safety evaluation and training.
- Autogenic (relaxation) training.
- Balance training and muscular strengthening exercises and other physical therapy.

The rehabilitation goal is for the patient to be as independent and productive as possible while managing their pain. Our skilled staff of medical professionals work in collaboration with your physician while using education tools for the patient and family. Strong support from your family as well as your medical team can help minimize painful episodes.

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