

RECORD YOUR FIRST STEP TOWARDS REACHING YOUR GOALS BELOW.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

This handout will help guide you through talking with your health care provider about your pain management options. Bring this with you and take notes.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACUTE PAIN AND CHRONIC PAIN?

Acute pain is usually short term and often not difficult to identify. Acute pain might be the pain you feel as you recover from surgery.

Chronic pain is usually long term and the causes may be more challenging to identify. Chronic pain might be the pain you feel from an injury sustained years ago.

HOW MUCH PAIN SHOULD I EXPECT?

How much pain you will experience depends on your situation. Your provider will explain what kind of pain is typical for your specific situation, and what the expected level of mobility is as you work to manage your pain and improve your day-to-day function.

CAN MY PAIN BE CURED?

Pain levels vary from person to person. Pain is a part of your body's alarm system that lets you know when something is wrong so you will seek out treatment. The goal for a pain treatment plan is to adequately control pain to allow you to function better and gain independence. Appropriate pain management does not automatically mean zero pain, and feeling pain is normal as you progress (with chronic pain) or recover (with acute pain). Some days you may feel more pain than others, and this is normal. Your provider will work with you to make sure any ongoing reason for pain is treated appropriately.

HOW CAN I DESCRIBE THE PAIN TO MY PROVIDER?

Your pain is very real and it's important to establish a language to speak to your provider about it. Your provider may ask you to rate the impact that pain currently has on your life on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being "no pain" and 10 being "pain as bad as you can imagine."



Write in your response below each question.

WHAT NUMBER BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PAIN DURING THE PAST WEEK?



DURING THE PAST WEEK, HOW HAS PAIN HAS INTERFERED WITH YOUR GENERAL ACTIVITY?

HOW CAN MY PAIN BE MANAGED?

Your responses can provide a better idea of how much your pain is impacting your life. Please include any concrete examples of things you can and can't do, because these can be helpful during your discussion with your health care provider, and can give them a better idea of what goals may be important to you.

RECORD YOUR LONG-TERM AND SHORT-TERM GOALS BELOW.

Your provider will then build a plan with you to meet these goals. Start where you are, not where you think you should be, and adjust from there. You may be prescribed a combination of treatment options.

For instance, you may be prescribed exercise. During your pain management treatment, you may experience better days than others and feel like you can push yourself a bit. However, you should pace your activities to decrease discomfort and prevent pain from flaring up.

You may be prescribed medication. Your provider will talk to you about the medications that can help you reduce pain and accomplish your goals, including:

- A reasonable time limit before prescribing medications
- Medications starting with non-opioids; opioids, if clinically indicated
- Expected duration of suggested medication, especially after a surgery or trauma, or if an opioid is prescribed
- Opioid discontinuation may be necessary prior to complete resolution of pain

RECORD YOUR PROVIDER'S RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW.

WHAT IF MY PAIN GETS WORSE?

Your provider will form a plan with you to address pain, before it happens so you know what to do to prevent the pain from getting worse.

RECORD YOUR PROVIDER'S RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW.