

YOUR PRESCRIPTION

Patient name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Tick where applicable and complete details in the boxes below

MEDICINE OPTIONS	NON-MEDICINE OPTIONS
Analgesics Paracetamol <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-inflammatories <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Physical (body) Exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapy <input type="checkbox"/> Massage <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Opioid medicines	Psychological (mind) CBT <input type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Other pain relieving medicines	Mind-body Yoga <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation <input type="checkbox"/> Biofeedback <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Record the details of the medicine and non-medicine interventions to be trialled:

Date	Active ingredient	Brand name	Strength	Dose	Frequency

Non-medicines		
Date	Therapy	Practitioner

Measurable pain management goals			
Goal type	Current level	Aim	Time frame
Pain			
Physical/exercise			
Function/Tasks			
Social/emotional			

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CHRONIC PAIN

Can chronic pain be treated without medicine?

While people with chronic pain often take some kind of medicine(s), typically they do not provide full relief. Chronic pain is a complex condition and there are a variety of other strategies which can help to manage it.

What if my medicines aren't working?

It is unlikely that any pain reliever will be able to completely take away chronic pain.

Medicines are best used along with other non-medicine approaches.

The goal of treatment with pain relievers is to reduce pain to a level that allows you to improve your physical functioning and quality of life.

What is self-management?

Like any long-term complex condition, chronic pain requires self-management. Self-management may include setting step-by-step achievable goals to give you something to aim for.

Self-management goals should cover different aspects of your life:

- ▶ Physical goals – based on how long you can exercise for and how difficult the exercise is.
- ▶ Functional/task goals – focused on achieving everyday living tasks such as housework, hobbies or work.
- ▶ Social and emotional goals – covering moods, relationships, family life and work.

Will my pain get worse if I am very active?

When you have constant pain, it seems natural to avoid doing things like walking, bending and moving around as they can make the feeling of pain worse. However, our bodies are designed to move. When we decrease activity, we lose muscle strength – over time this means that even simple activities can become more difficult.

Many people with pain are afraid of exercise as they think it will cause more problems. However, regular stretching and exercise can actually decrease pain and increase your ability to function physically.

Should I wait for my pain to go away before I go back to activities I used to do?

Starting to exercise and learning new coping skills are important strategies to help improve your ability to function and reduce the impact of the pain. It is also important not to wait for the pain to be completely gone before starting normal activities, including work.

Who can help me deal with my pain?

There are a number of health professionals who can provide help and support. Managing chronic pain requires a consideration of a number of different aspects of life and these can be covered in a multidisciplinary plan. This may include referrals to specialists such as physiotherapists, psychologists or specialist pain clinics.

Will opioids help my chronic pain?

Opioid pain relievers (eg, codeine, oxycodone, morphine) are often effectively used to treat severe acute pain or cancer pain.

There is no clear evidence to show that long-term opioid therapy can greatly improve chronic pain and restore physical function. At the same time there is growing evidence for the harms associated with long-term opioid use.

If you and your GP decide a trial of opioids is appropriate, you may be asked to agree to an opioid treatment plan or contract. It is important to understand that treatment with opioids may not be helpful. Opioids are not intended to be used long-term and will need to be stopped at some stage.

Stopping opioids

When you and your GP agree to stop your opioids, you will be asked to slowly decrease your use of opioids; this is known as tapering.

It is important that you follow the tapering schedule you agree to with your GP and not just abruptly stop them. This will help reduce the chance of you having withdrawal symptoms.

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