



General Authority for Health Services for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

Al-Rahba Hospital, Department of Pharmacy

Facts about Pain & Pain Management



What is Pain?

Our body is totally covered by a network called "The Nervous System", this network carries "Messages" from all over the body to the brain to tell it what's going on in the body, one of those messages is Pain.

Pain is an electro-chemical "Message" to the brain telling that there is actual or potential tissue damage.



What are the symptoms of pain?

Pain Symptoms may vary according to the nature of the pain causing problem, for example, dysmenorrhoea causes pelvic pain, a virus (Herpes) may cause continuous burning pain, a musculoskeletal problem may cause stiffness & tingling, a neuropathic problem may cause burning & tingling pain.

What are the types of pain and how can we deal with them?

There are two types of pain:

- **Acute pain:** Pain that is cause-known & self-limiting, usually relieved by analgesics.
- **Chronic pain:** Pain that lasts for a long time, usually non-drug therapy is needed in addition to the drug therapy to maximize the benefit from the therapy.

Drug therapy includes:

- ◆ **Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs):** They relieve pain by inhibiting a chemical substance called "Prostaglandins" this substance is a major factor in pain symptoms.
 - Examples for NSAIDs: Ibuprofen (PROFIN, ADVIL), Diclofenac Sodium (VOLTAREN) & Meloxicam (MOBIC)
 - **Common Adverse Reactions include:** Nausea, abdominal distress/cramps/pain, flatulence.
- ◆ **Paracetamol (PANADOL):** Acts like NSAIDs with more antipyretic effect but no anti-inflammatory effect.
 - **Common Adverse effects include:** Liver problems upon long term use.
- ◆ **Controlled drugs:** They are stronger analgesics, long-term use or abuse can cause serious problems such as addiction and respiratory depression (shortness of breath).
- ◆ **Don't take more than the quantity prescribed by the physician and don't exceed the maximum daily dose.**

Non-drug therapy includes (but not limited to):

- Massage.
- Relaxing.
- Remaining hopeful.
- Positive attitudes and cheerful thoughts.
- Trusting the physicians as he knows the best about your pain and its treatment.



What are the benefits of effective pain management?

Following the physician's instructions will help you to:

- Control the pain rather than letting the pain control you.
 - Return back to work and function efficiently.
 - Reduce the number of visits to physicians & Minimize your dependence on medicines.
- All these points will help improving your life on both personal & family level.



When pain is an emergency?

Return to emergency if any of the following develops:

- Sudden severe pain in one or both eyes.
- Sudden, intense chest pain and/or pain that radiates to the shoulders, arms, back or jaw.
- Chest pain that gets worse with breathing.
- Pain with urination or a severe pain in the kidney area.
- Pain in the limbs, especially if they are pale & cold.
- Abdominal pain that lasts longer than 30 minutes.