

GETTING HELP

SPEAK UP! Tell your practitioner that you are in pain.

Bring a list of questions and concerns to your appointment. It will help you organize your thoughts and help you remember what is important.

Explain exactly where it hurts. Is the pain in one place or does it move around?

Describe what the pain feels like using simple words like burning, stabbing, achey, tight, sharp or pressing.

Describe what makes the pain better or what makes it worse. Is the pain worse in the morning, does walking make it better or worse?

Describe how much it hurts...does it interfere with your life and/or activities. Can you sleep? Work? How is your mood?

Remember to have a list of what you have tried in the past to relieve pain and whether or not it was helpful.

Keep a record of your pain for a few days. Pain specialists use a 'zero to ten' scale, zero being no pain and ten being as terrible as you can imagine.

GET INVOLVED

We are always looking for volunteers to help us with this work. Contact us to assist with projects aligned with your availability and interests.

Our contact information:

**New Hampshire Pain Initiative
c/o New Hampshire Hospice
and Palliative Care Organization
125 Airport Rd
Concord, NH 03301
603-225-0900
or
www.nhpain.org**

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**FREEDOM
FROM PAIN**

www.nhpain.org

WHAT IS NHPI?

New Hampshire Pain Initiative (NHPI) is a grass-roots organization committed to improving the way pain is managed in our state. Medical professionals and interested citizens work together to further NHPI's goals:

- Promote safe, effective pain control.
- Educate both healthcare professionals, and the citizens of NH about pain.
- Advocate for public awareness and legislation that supports state of the art pain management.
- Provide current, accurate information about resources and services within New Hampshire to help people affected by pain.

WHAT IS PAIN?

Pain is a very personal experience, and is best defined by the person experiencing pain. Pain is a physical and emotional experience that may warn the person that something is wrong (e.g. illness, injury, imminent danger). The way you describe your pain can give clues to the cause and help determine effective treatment. This may include a combination of medication, physical therapy, heat, cold, massage, acupuncture, and diet and exercise.

MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

Pain is an inevitable part of aging and illness.

Pain is a warning. Do not assume your pain is normal or must be endured.

Strong people can handle pain.

Pain can weaken your immune system and cause depression. Personal strength comes with feeling your best.

Addiction is common in people taking pain medicine.

Most people taking medication for pain do not become addicted. The body does adjust to certain pain medications, and people must cut down gradually before stopping them. However, this is not a sign of addiction.

All health care professionals have expertise in pain management.

Many health professionals have little formal training in pain or hold onto outdated notions about pain and its treatment. Professionals with expertise and formal training in pain control are available to help and can be accessed through your primary care medical provider.

PAIN FACTS

It is estimated that over 50 million Americans suffer from chronic pain. The impact of pain on lost income, productivity, and care may cost our nation over \$79 billion annually. Pain can cause changes in your quality of life, sometimes altering your entire life. People with chronic pain commonly experience loss of interest in enjoyable activities, straining of personal relationships, difficulty working, lower appetite, sexual difficulties, and difficulty sleeping.

Even when pain persists, there is good reason for hope. Many different comforting techniques are available and new innovations to alleviate pain are constantly being developed. Pain may cause people to lose hope, but specially trained and experienced pain management professionals can help you.

BARRIERS TO PAIN CONTROL

- Minimizing and/or generalizing pain.
- Concerns about addiction and possible side effects of medications.
- Lack of knowledge of available treatments.
- Concern about the cost of treatment.

New Hampshire Pain Initiative – Promoting relief of pain through research, public and professional education, legislative awareness & advocacy.