

Managing Chronic Pain: Treatment Options

Fact Sheet for Patients and Families

Chronic pain is long-term pain. Your primary care provider can help you make a plan to manage it. Learning to manage chronic pain well can help you:

- Do the things you love
- Improve your mood
- Think more clearly
- Improve sleep
- Be there for friends and family

Your treatment may include one or more of the following:

Living Well with Chronic Pain Self-Management Program

The goal of this free 6-week class is to help you have more energy, less pain, and be more satisfied with your life. You'll learn to:

- Handle difficult emotions
- Problem solve
- Work with a healthcare team
- Use medicines well
- Set weekly goals.

To find a free class near you, ask your healthcare provider or visit the [Utah Healthy Aging Program website](#).

Daily Self-care

- Be active
- Take time to relax
- Sleep well
- Eat well

Personal Support

Connect with people and causes you care about. Work with a behavioral specialist to:

- Manage anxiety and depression
- Learn ways to change negative thoughts and emotions

Non-opioid Medicines

Ask your primary care provider or pharmacist about these medicines and their side effects.

- **Over-the-counter pain medicines** — These can include pills, patches, ointments, and creams. They usually include the following types of medicines: NSAIDs (like ibuprofen), acetaminophen (like Tylenol), and topical anesthetics (like lidocaine).
- **Medicines used to treat depression and anxiety** — These can treat pain, depression and anxiety caused by pain, or both.
- **Medicines used to treat seizures (neuropathic pain)** — These can be used to “calm down” the nervous system and the pain. These medicines are called “anticonvulsants.”

Other Healthcare Treatments

Ask your primary care provider to refer you to other healthcare providers.

- A **physical therapist** can help you with exercises that support your ability to do everyday activities.
- **Medical specialists** can help you manage your other health conditions that may add to your pain—such as diabetes or arthritis.
- A **pain specialist** can manage your pain with other treatments, such as injections.
- **Other specialists** can help with treatments such as chiropractic, yoga, acupuncture, and massage.

Managing Chronic Pain, Continued

Opioid medicine should be considered only after you have tried other treatments and they have not helped.

Opioid medicine can be an important part of treatment for some people. Talk with your doctor about the risks.

- Taking opioid medicine for an extended time can cause serious side effects.
- 1 in 4 people who use opioids for chronic pain struggles with addiction.
- 91 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

How can I learn more? Ask your healthcare provider for the Intermountain Health booklet ***Managing Chronic Pain***. Visit intermountainhealthcare.org/services/pain-management/ for more information.



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