

# Key Terms in Pain Management

## Pain Management

Pain management is the systematic study of clinical and basic science and its application for the reduction of pain and suffering. This discipline emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach to treatment, blending tools, techniques and principles taken from a variety of the healing arts to create a holistic paradigm for the reduction of pain and suffering.

## Acute Pain

Acute pain, for the most part, results from disease, inflammation, or injury to tissues. This type of pain generally comes on suddenly, for example, after trauma or surgery, and may be accompanied by anxiety or emotional distress. The cause of acute pain can usually be diagnosed and treated, and the pain is self-limiting, that is, it is confined to a given period of time and severity. In some rare instances, it can become chronic.

## Chronic Pain

Chronic pain is widely believed to represent disease itself. It can be made much worse by environmental and psychological factors. Chronic pain persists over a longer period of time than acute pain and is resistant to most medical treatments. It can—and often does—cause severe problems for patients. A person may have two or more co-existing chronic pain conditions.

## Addiction

Addiction is a primary, chronic, neurobiological disease, with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. It is characterized by behaviors that include one or more of the following: impaired control over drug use, compulsive use, continued use despite harm, and craving.

## Physical Dependence

Physical dependence is a state of adaptation that is manifested by a drug class-specific withdrawal syndrome that can be produced by abrupt cessation, rapid dose reduction, decreasing blood levels of the drug, and/or administration of an antagonist.

## Tolerance

Tolerance is a state of adaptation in which exposure to a drug induces changes that result in a diminution of one or more of the drug's effects over time.

## Pain Scale

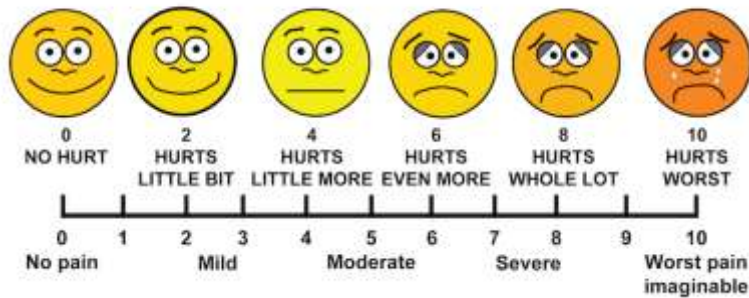
It's not always easy to describe pain. A pain rating scale is a tool to help you describe how much pain you're feeling. You generally rate your pain on a scale using numbers.

Pain scales:

- Give your providers a clearer understanding of how you feel.
- Help providers track how your pain is changing over time and whether treatment is effective.

Many pain scales also help you describe the type of pain you're feeling (stabbing, sharp, dull, and so on).

## PAIN MEASUREMENT SCALE



### Epidural

An epidural is a procedure to block pain in the hips, knees, pelvis, chest, or abdomen. A doctor injects pain medication into the epidural space that surrounds your spinal cord. It can be delivered through a catheter or as a shot.

You can remain awake and able to move with an epidural. Depending on the amount of pain medication you receive, you may still feel motion, warmth, and cold in your legs, or your legs may feel numb. You should still be able to walk. The medication should reduce your pain enough that you can do normal activities.

### Patient-controlled analgesia (PCA)

You're in control

If you're given a local anesthetic, an epidural, or an IV through a catheter, you may also be given a PCA pump. PCA stands for patient-controlled analgesia, which means that you decide when you get another dose of medication.

Here's how it works:

1. A needle is used to insert a catheter (tiny tube) into your skin or vein. The needle is then removed and the catheter remains.
2. The catheter is attached to a supply of pain medication and to a pump that delivers the medication.
3. The pump has a button that you can push as soon as you need more pain medication. You don't have to wait for a doctor or nurse to give it to you.
4. No one but you should ever push the PCA button.

PCA is safe. For your safety, the pump is set with a "lock out" time limit. That means if you ask for a dose too soon, the pump won't give it to you. This will help prevent an overdose of your medication.