

HEALTH REALLY MATTERS

Pain Management: acute/short-term pain

Quick facts about pain

- Acute pain is temporary, lasting minutes up to several weeks.
- Each person experiences pain very differently.
- Common causes are muscle sprains or strains, broken bones, burns, flare up of a condition like arthritis or after surgery.
- Think about the following questions which will help your healthcare team to manage your pain:
 - Where do you feel the pain? Does it stay in one place or move around?
 - When did the pain start? What were you doing when it began?
 - How bad is the pain on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 is no pain and 10 is worst pain imaginable)?
 - What makes the pain better or worse?
 - Can you describe the pain (sharp, stabbing, throbbing)?

- How has the pain affected your daily activities (working, sleeping, getting around)?
- What have you tried already to manage your pain?
- Which medicines, how much and how often?

Common treatments for pain

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol products):
 - Usual dose is 325 – 1000mg every 4 – 6 hours.
 - Comes in liquid, tablet and suppository.
 - Helpful for mild to moderate pain.
 - Very well tolerated.
 - Is found in many non-prescription products, always read the ingredients when choosing a product.
 - Can be combined with other medicines like muscle relaxants.
- Caution:
 - Maximum of 3000 mg/day for most people
 - Elderly people or those with kidney or liver disease should use less.
 - Can interact with warfarin (talk to your pharmacist).



- NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs):
 - Comes in liquid, tablet, suppository and gel.
 - Non-prescription products include ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), acetylsalicylic acid (Aspirin), and diclofenac (Voltaren emulgel)
 - Ibuprofen: 200 mg every 4 – 6 hours.
 - Naproxen: 220 mg every 8 – 12 hours.
 - Caution:
 - Talk to your pharmacist about maximum doses
 - Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using if you have peptic ulcer disease, kidney failure, heart failure or are pregnant.
 - If you have an allergy to one you should avoid them all.
- Herbal products:
 - Come in liquid, tablet or cream forms.
 - Include products such as capsaicin, arnica, turmeric, glucosamine.
 - May interact with other medicines so be sure to talk to your pharmacist.
- Physiotherapy, massage therapy and acupuncture may also be helpful .
- RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation).
 - Cold: don't put ice directly on the skin, ice the area for 5 – 10 minutes then off for an hour.
 - Heat can be helpful 48 hours after an injury. Be careful not to overheat the area and don't use on areas of skin breakdown or bleeding.

Your Pharmacist can

- Help you choose a product to best help treat your pain.
- Discuss benefits and possible side effects of the different medicines and work with you and your doctor to help you get the most out of them.
- Suggest non-drug ideas to help manage your pain.

Find more great information and tools here

- HealthLink BC: <http://goo.gl/SpvxP7>
- Ankle sprain: <http://goo.gl/3DQS6I>
- Canadian Physiotherapy Association: <https://goo.gl/LsVvKQ>
- Canadian Pain Coalition—
What about pain medications: <http://goo.gl/X1w0zQ>

Notes: