



# Pain Management Services

UHN

## Information for patients and families

### Read this booklet to learn about:

- **Who we are**
- **What we do**
- **What to expect**

### Why is it important to relieve my pain?

You will get better faster if your pain is well controlled.

Less pain means less stress on your body. Your body heals better with less stress. You can breathe deeply and cough and move more easily.

Less pain will decrease your risk of problems such as:

- Infection
- Trouble breathing
- Muscle spasms
- Heart attack

Your healthcare team will work with you to help you manage your pain. Let your healthcare team know if you are feeling pain.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information: [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca)  
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## **What services are available?**

At University Health Network, we take a whole body approach to help you manage your pain. We have teams here that are focused on helping you find out what is causing your pain. Their job is to make plans to help you manage it. Pain management plans let you know what treatments will work best when you feel pain.

Each team is made of up many different healthcare professionals such as:

- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- Doctors
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational therapists

You and your family are an important part of the pain management team. Together, we can work towards effective pain management.

## **How many pain management teams are there?**

### **1. Acute Pain Service**

Acute pain happens when you are injured. It usually goes away when your injury is healed. There is a special group of advanced practice nurses and doctors who focus only on relieving your acute pain. They will work with your healthcare team to develop a plan to treat your pain.

### **2. Chronic Pain Services**

Chronic pain is any pain that last more than 6 months after doctors expect you to heal. Chronic pain is harder to manage than acute pain. We have a special clinic to help patients with chronic pain. The doctors that specialize in helping people manage pain may be able to help you.

### **3. Cancer Pain and Palliative Care Services**

This service is here to help you manage your pain and your symptoms. They will get to know your whole health history and create a special plan to help you. This service will work with your healthcare team from the time you are admitted to the hospital to the time you leave. They will also continue to work with your healthcare team if you need to come back for follow up visits.

The cancer pain and palliative care services team may use medicine but they have other ways to help you as well.

### **4. Complementary Alternative Therapies (CAMs)**

UHN supports the use of natural therapies such as:

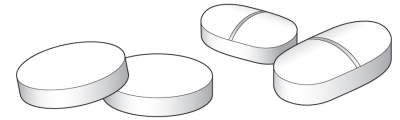
- Heat and cold packs
- Therapeutic touch
- Massage therapy (offered in some hospital units)
- Relaxation
- Psychological therapy
- Mind-body control

Tell your healthcare team if you are taking any herbal or botanical therapies. These things can have an effect on how your medicine and treatments work while in the hospital.

## How will I be given my pain medicine?



Your doctor can give you pain medicine in many ways.  
Some ways include:



What it is called	How it works
Pills or tablets	Pills or tablets swallowed by mouth.
Intravenous (IV)	Intravenous means inside the vein. Pain medicine can be given into the vein through a small needle or a plastic tube called a catheter.
Feeding tube	Pain medicine put through your feeding tube if you have one.
Needle injection	A needle given into your muscle or under your skin.
Patient Controlled Analgesia	This is an intravenous medicine that you give yourself by pressing a button.
Epidural	Pain and numbing medication that goes through a thin tube into your back.
Nerve block	A needle injection that will numb the nerves.
Patch applied to skin	Pain medication is taped onto your skin. It is absorbed through your skin into your body.

**If you have any questions about your pain management plan, ask someone on your healthcare team. They can explain the pain medicines to you. They can also tell you about possible side effects.**

## My loved one can't talk about their pain. How can I help?

Your loved one may not be able to talk about their pain. When this happens, some things you can do to help them are:

- Tell the healthcare team if you notice that your loved one looks uncomfortable or in pain.
- Ask the healthcare team if you have any questions.

**Talk to your healthcare team if you have any questions or concerns.**

**We are here to help!**

**Visit this website for more information:**

**UHN Pain Management**

**[www.uhn.ca/About\\_UHN/programs/pain\\_management/](http://www.uhn.ca/About_UHN/programs/pain_management/)**