



Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
UW Medicine
Seattle Children's

Pain

Just the Facts

Pain is an unpleasant sensation that **ONLY** you can feel. It is what you say it is. A change or increase in pain does not necessarily mean your cancer has returned or is progressing. Pain may be caused by a number of things including cancer, treatment of the cancer, or a medical problem not related to the cancer diagnosis. Most pain can be treated with medication and/or treatments such as physical therapy. Your doctor and nurse will assist you to find the best possible way to control your pain. On occasion your doctor may ask a doctor who specializes in cancer pain management to manage your pain.

Your Goals:

- ✓ Report your pain
- ✓ Rate your pain- keep track of what triggers it and what makes it better
- ✓ Have pain treated promptly
- ✓ Maintain optimal level of physical activity



Emergency Signs and Symptoms:

Call 911 IMMEDIATELY if you have

- Severe chest/arm pain
- Severe squeezing or pressure in chest
- Severe sudden headache

Urgent Signs and Symptoms

Call the Clinic or the After Hours Clinic NOW if you have:

- New or uncontrolled pain
- New headache
- Chest discomfort / heart “flip-flop” feeling
- Pounding heart

- Painful Central Line site or area of “tunnel”
- Burning in chest or stomach
- Strong stomach pain
- Pain with infusion of medications or fluids into Central Line.

What You Can Do At Home:

- ➔ Maintain your treatment plan- take medications as ordered. Do not increase your dose of medication without talking to your nurse or doctor.
- ➔ Keep a pain journal.
- ➔ Use hot or cold packs.
- ➔ Find a relaxation technique that works for you such as guided imagery, hypnosis, massage or therapeutic touch.
- ➔ Listen to relaxing music.
- ➔ Taking care of your pain will help you sleep better, feel stronger and better able to cope with your illness.
- ➔ Continue activities that are meaningful to you. Such activities may help you notice less pain or discomfort.
- ➔ Before taking pain medication/opioids, ask your nurse or doctor about ways to prevent constipation.