

# MANAGING CHRONIC PAIN

A GUIDE FOR  
PATIENTS



**HELP**  
*is here.*



PREVENT • TREAT • RECOVER

# CONSIDER NON-OPIOID APPROACHES FOR RELIEVING PAIN.



## MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE.

The choices you make now on how to manage your pain will affect your overall well-being and long-term health. You should follow the advice of your health care provider and choose the safest options, which means avoiding the use of opioid drugs when possible. You play a vital role in how well and how quickly you restore function and quality of life. You should:

- Consider non-opioid ways to manage pain — talk to your health care provider for suggestions.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Stay active and exercise.
- Use over-the-counter medicines such as acetaminophen (like Tylenol) or ibuprofen (like Advil and Motrin) to relieve pain, before talking with your health care provider about opioids.
- Make a plan with and follow the guidance of your health care provider.

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# THERE ARE SAFE, EFFECTIVE METHODS TO TREAT AND MANAGE YOUR PAIN.

There are proven non-opioid therapies that you should consider to manage your pain. Talk with your health care provider to learn if there is a therapy — or combination of therapies — that is right for you:



**Acupuncture** — A therapy that targets peripheral nerves using thin needles, heat, and pressure applied to certain places on the body to stimulate relaxation and decrease inflammation



**Chiropractic therapy** — A treatment during which the hands or special instruments are used to manipulate the spine to reduce spinal stress, tension, inflammation, and pain



**Cognitive behavioral therapy, including biofeedback** — A form of “talk” therapy that helps to modify negative emotions, behaviors, and thoughts by helping you address the awareness of pain and focus on coping mechanisms and solutions



**Healthy lifestyle** — Movement, including exercise, healthy eating, stress management, and getting adequate sleep can make a difference in how you experience pain



**Massage** — A type of treatment during which the soft tissues of your body are manipulated, using stretching techniques and applying varying degrees of pressure to ease muscle and joint pain



**Physical therapy** — Exercise, hands-on therapy, and education about pain that includes active participation in recovery



**Yoga** — A form of exercise that combines breath control, meditation, and stretching movements to strengthen muscles and relieve mental stress

## UNDERSTAND THE PAIN YOU ARE EXPERIENCING.

### YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT:

- Pain after surgery is NORMAL
- Most pain is worse for the first two to three days
- Chronic pain may not instantly go away — it often takes time and a combination of therapies to resolve

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# NON-OPIOID MEDICATIONS CAN BE EFFECTIVE.



Over-the-counter medications may be all you need for pain control. Other therapies have been shown to significantly lessen pain and improve function over time. Proven non-opioid anti-inflammatory drugs include:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin)
- Naprosyn
- Gabapentin/pregabalin
- Serotonin/norepinephrine
- Creams or lotions such as lidocaine and capsaicin

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## OPIOIDS ARE DANGEROUS.

AN OPIOID IS A STRONG  
PRESCRIPTION PAIN  
MEDICATION. IT CAN:

- 1** Have side effects that include nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, dizziness, constipation, and increased pain
- 2** Put you at risk for dependence and overdose
- 3** Be dangerous for you if you have a history of depression or anxiety; a history of using or abusing alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs; or a history of long-term chronic pain

# TALK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ABOUT THE BEST WAY TO MANAGE YOUR PAIN.

Discuss the best pain management approach for you. To learn more about pre-surgical tips, safe medications for dental procedures, and other non-opioid pain management options, visit **HelpsHereDE.com**.



The information in this brochure was based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Guidelines for Pain Management.