

Medicines for long lasting (chronic) pain



Pain that goes on for more than 3 months is called long lasting or chronic pain. You can have pain that goes on even after the injured part of your body has healed. Pain can make your mind, body and spirit feel no good. This fact sheet explains what you can do for long lasting pain and why medicines are not the key to feeling stronger.

There are many things you can do to deal with long lasting pain



Get good sleep



Start moving, keep moving



Get support from family and clinic



Look after your mind and spirit



Use medicines for a short time for flare ups



Eat good tucker

Medicines are only part of feeling well

Some people might take medicines for a short time to help them keep moving. Or during arthritis or gout flare ups, when joints suddenly become more painful.

Types of pain medicines include:

- ▶ Paracetamol (eg, 'Panadol')
 - For short-term (acute) pain, like a headache or during flare ups of arthritis pain.
- ▶ Anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs eg, ibuprofen or 'Nurofen')
 - For short-term pain, like after an injury or for arthritis or gout flare ups.
- ▶ Strong pain medicines (opioids eg, codeine, tramadol, oxycodone)
 - For stronger short-term pain, like after an operation, a major injury or for cancer pain.
 - They are not helpful for long lasting pain.

Pain medicines are not good to use long term

- ▶ Medicines might help for a short time, or when you have a flare up. They do not heal pain.
- ▶ They may make other conditions worse, eg, kidney and heart problems.
- ▶ After time, you might feel the need to take more of the medicine to get the same effect. This can lead to even more health problems.
- ▶ Ask your doctor what else you can do to help your pain. Get support from your Aboriginal Health Worker and doctor to help you manage your pain and live your life more fully.

Ask for help if you think you are using too much pain medicine

They can cause problems

You may notice some changes, called side effects, in your body after you start your medicine.

Not everyone gets side effects but they can make some people very sick. Different medicines have different side effects. Side effects from pain medicines can be things like:

Feeling sleepy



Don't drive or operate machinery if the medicine makes you sleepy



Feeling dizzy



Constipation

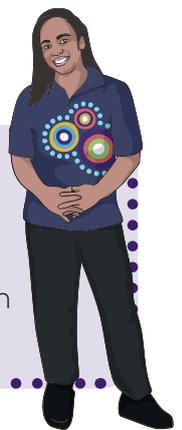


Feeling or being sick

Talk to your doctor or health worker, or go back to the clinic, if your medicine is causing side effects that trouble you.

For more information

- ▶ Talk to your health worker, doctor, nurse or pharmacist about ways you can manage your pain yourself. With their help, set some goals and make a **deadly pain plan**.
- ▶ Visit **Our Mob** Pain Management Network for videos, stories and factsheets about pain for Aboriginal people.



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