

Pain Management

Introduction

We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care using information from the Faculty of Pain Medicine, and Live Well with Pain.

What is chronic pain?

Chronic pain is a persistent pain, which continues after healing or is the result of ongoing damage and includes spinal pain, post-traumatic pain (e.g. after amputation or surgery), pain involving the central or peripheral nervous system (e.g. post stroke pain, complex regional pain syndrome, diabetic neuropathy, post herpetic neuralgia and sciatica) and pain associated with other chronic diseases such as angina, arthritis, endometriosis, headache and pancreatitis. This includes cancer pain, which encompasses any pain in patients with cancer that is caused by the cancer or associated with the treatment.

Chronic Pain is also recognised as a Long Term Condition in its own right. Of all chronic diseases, pain related conditions had the biggest impact on quality of life – more so than cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and visual impairments¹.

What is acute pain?

Acute pain relates to pain occurring during tissue damage and repair for example during sudden illness, surgery, trauma and burns. The pain typically improves with tissue healing.

Who experiences chronic and acute pain?

- **8 million people** have chronic pain of at least moderate intensity. A further **6 million** have some chronic pain of some form.
- **6-8% population** have severe pain that prevents some or most activities.
- The prevalence of chronic pain **doubles over the age of 65**, but chronic pain can be experienced by anyone.

Who are Pain Medicine Specialists?

A Pain Medicine Specialist is a doctor with specialist qualifications who undertakes the comprehensive assessment and management of acute, chronic and cancer pain in adult and paediatric patients, usually working within a multidisciplinary team. Most Pain Medicine Specialists are hospital based, though some work as specialists in the community or other health care settings. Whilst most patients with pain can be managed in the primary or community sectors, some patients will need the involvement of specialists to manage their care.

- [Click here to read more about Pain Medicine Specialists.](#)

Key messages in Pain

The Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) has agreed some key messages with our partners in the British Pain Society, the Chronic Pain Policy Coalition and Pain UK that describe the national state of play with regards to chronic pain.

- [Click here to read the UK Pain Messages.](#)

Patient Information leaflets on medications and common pain interventions

The FPM has produced some patient information leaflets on medications and interventions commonly used to treat persistent pain. The five medication leaflets provide basic information on amitriptyline, nortriptyline, pregabalin, gabapentin and duloxetine. The leaflets were created with the help of multi-professionals as well as patient representatives and are intended to be handed out to patients when they are prescribed these medications.

The 16 intervention leaflets provide information relating to commonly undertaken injections in pain medicine and to answer some questions that patients may have. In undertaking these leaflets, it is recognised that practice may vary significantly and throughout there are statements that refer the patient to the pain practitioner for more information.

- [Click here to read the FPM information leaflets on medications and interventions.](#)

Live Well with Pain

Live Well with Pain was created by a small group of health care professionals in England working in pain management, using a self-management approach with their patients.



- [Click here to read about Live Well with Pain.](#)

What should I do if my Pain is deteriorating?

Please contact your General Practice outside of scheduled care with St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. Your Practice will assess the reason for deterioration and any further steps needed to help you to get better.

- [Click here to read about Pain Management at St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.](#)

Useful links

- [Faculty of Pain Medicine](#)
- [The British Pain Society](#)
- [The Royal College of Anaesthetists](#)
- [Pain UK](#)
- [Live Well with Pain](#)
- [St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Pain Clinic homepage](#)

References

1. Sprangers, M.A., de Regt, E.B., Andries, F., van Agt, H.M., Bijl, R.V., de Boer, J.B., Foets, M., Hoeymans, N., Jacobs, A.E., Kempen, G.I., Miedema, H.S., Tjhuis, M.A., de Haes, H.C. (2000). Which chronic conditions are associated with better or poorer quality of life? Journal of Clinical Epidemiology. 53(9), pp.895-907. DOI: 10.1016/s0895-4356(00)00204-3.