

## **Pain Management**

Pain is a complex concept which can be difficult to convey or understand. It may be associated with actual or perceived tissue damage in combination with sensory, emotional, cognitive and social aspects.

Unlike acute pain, which has a known cause and stops when it is no longer present, chronic pain often manifests from a number of different causes, and may persist long after the initial injury has healed.

Without support, patients with chronic pain may find that their social life, work life and leisure are affected. They may become frustrated, sad or angry that they cannot continue to what they once enjoyed doing. As a result, patients may push themselves past their normal limits on days when the pain is not so severe. Consequently, this can cause further spikes in pain, leading to further limitations to their usual work and daily activities.

Full recovery from chronic pain is rare. However, with support and treatment, patients can be better empowered with management strategies to help cope with their pain and improve overall quality of life.

### **How is it treated?**

A multi-disciplinary team of doctors, nurses, psychologists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists are involved in the care of patients with chronic pain. The aim of treatment is to improve patients' independence and quality of life despite chronic pain.

Physiotherapists can help patients with strength training, regaining flexibility which can help to improve their confidence in managing their symptoms. Occupational therapists can help to explore the relationship between pain and daily activities, and equip patients with coping strategies such as activity modification and relaxation skills. Collectively, this can further empower patients with self-management skills to cope with their pain both physically and emotionally.

### **Useful websites**

[A 5 minute guide to understanding chronic pain and what you can do about it](#)

[Pain Education](#)

[Occupational Therapy and Pain Rehabilitation](#)

[Pain concern – pain topics](#)