

News *Brief*

Summer 2016

Imagine what it would be like to ease the pain of others if even for a moment. Learn how to relieve your pain – or that of thousands of others – in this issue!





There's been a lot of news about opioids recently as a treatment for pain. Understanding your pain and its causes help determine the best treatment needed. You may be surprised that opioids are only one of the treatment options for pain.

To your health

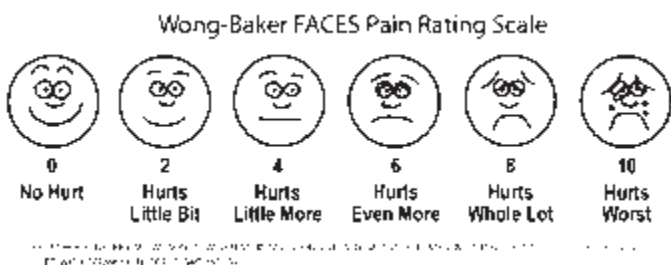
Understanding pain. Pain is your body's response to injury, illness or surgery. It can be constant or it can come and go. It can be acute or chronic.

Acute pain lasts less than six weeks, and it disappears when the underlying cause of pain has been treated or has healed.

Chronic pain is pain that does not get better for 6 weeks or longer. There are many causes, including nerve or muscle pain, arthritis, infection or a fracture. Chronic pain may hurt all the time, or come and go.

How is chronic pain diagnosed? Your provider will try to find the cause of your pain by asking where your pain is, what it feels like and when it started. You'll be asked how your pain is affecting your daily life, mood and sleep, and if you have health problems that may make your pain worse. Sometimes an imaging study or simulation test will be used to help narrow down the cause.

Rating pain. Pain scales use things like numbers or faces to help you describe how bad your pain is.



Common treatments for chronic pain

- Acetaminophen decreases pain and is available without a doctor's order.
- NSAIDs help decrease pain and swelling. This medicine is available with or without a doctor's order. Note: If you take blood thinner medicine, ask if NSAIDs are safe for you.
- Prescription pain medicine such as opioids.
- Anesthetics can be rubbed on the skin or injected into a nerve or muscle to block pain signals.
- Other medicines may reduce pain, anxiety, muscle tension or swelling.
- Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) gives mild, safe electrical signals through a small device attached to your skin.
- Surgery may be an option for certain conditions.

Taking prescription medicine safely

Although only about 2 percent of patients become addicted to opioids, it's good to know how to take them safely.

- The most common side effect of narcotics is constipation. Other side effects include nausea, vomiting and itchy skin.
- Do not mix narcotics with other narcotics.
- Do not drink alcohol when you take narcotics.
- Narcotics may impair your ability to drive or work safely.
- You may need more narcotics over time to control your pain. This is called physical tolerance.

Thanks to you

United Pain Center is a hospital-based outpatient clinic that takes a team approach to anyone experiencing chronic and acute pain using many methods. Doctors and advance practice providers work together on pain evaluations, care plan recommendations and follow-up services to improve pain and quality of life.

Top reasons why people seek help from United Pain Center:

1. Muscle pain
2. Nerve pain
3. Post-shingles pain
4. Headache
5. Complex Regional Pain Syndrome/
Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy
6. Cancer pain
7. Complex chronic pain problems
8. Spine care

United Pain Center has many resources to help manage pain and improve quality of life, including:

- diagnostic and therapeutic injections, such as nerve blocks and epidural steroid injections.
- medication management.
- biofeedback therapy.
- psychological assessment and support.
- acupuncture.
- social work support.
- inpatient pain consultations.

United Pain Center cares for the body and soul. There is a certain mindset that comes with chronic pain. The United Pain Center works with patients on how to help relieve the anger, anxiety, and depression that may occur with chronic pain.



Todd Hess, MD

United Pain Center is led by nationally recognized pain management expert, Todd Hess, MD. Dr. Hess has been honored multiple times as Top Doctor by Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine, Top Doctor for Women by Minnesota Monthly Magazine, and was a recipient of the much-coveted United Hospital Foundation Service to Humanity Award.

“With education, treatment and coaching, we are able to teach patients techniques that help them manage and control their pain and anxiety.”

Help United Pain Center continue to ease the pain for so many. **Donate today!**

United Hospital Foundation

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