

# Managing Pain



 Lakes Regional  
Healthcare

An Avera Partner

## Relax to reduce pain

When you are relaxed, pain medications work better and may assist in pain relief. Try these tips to help you relax:

- Position for comfort and ease of breathing, and use pillows for support
- Lower nearby lights and breathe deeply
- Listen to soft music
- Use your imagination and imagery
- Gently massage tight muscles

## Reducing pain with medications

### Types of medication to reduce pain:

- Regional anesthetics
- Analgesics
  - Narcotics
  - NSAIDS (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)
- Tranquilizers
- Sedatives
- Anti-nausea

### Medication delivery methods

- Injections
- IV
- Patient-controlled analgesic (PCA)
- Epidural
- Orally

# Managing Pain

## What is pain?

Pain is an uncomfortable feeling that tells you something is wrong in your body. Pain is your body's burglar alarm. Pain may be physical or emotional and can range from dull aches to sharp, stabbing sensations.

## Communicating your pain relief needs

- Each patient is an individual and experiences pain differently. It is important to communicate with your health care providers any history appropriate to pain management and when you are having pain and let them know when relief isn't obtained.
- In order to help speed recovery, we ask that you pay attention to your level of pain and use the pain scale (as illustrated in this brochure) to report your pain. Nursing staff uses these scales to assist in managing your pain levels. When patients cannot self-assess pain, a behavior scale is used. These intensity levels are available in every patient room.
- It is important to keep your pain out of the severe to moderate range, four and above, so do not wait until the pain is severe before you request relief.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. It will help you eat better, sleep better, move around easily and visit with your family and friends.
- Staff will be asking, on a routine basis, about your pain. They are your partners for managing pain. Communicate with them regarding your pain.

- The nurses will provide pain medicine or use alternative forms of pain relief as soon as possible after your request.
- If your pain is not controlled by your medicine or if you are having side effects, please tell your doctor or nurse so that something can be done about it.
- It is our goal to make you comfortable and realistic to believe pain will decrease with appropriate interventions. However, not all of the pain may be relieved.

## **Ways to ease pain for children**

- Be informed and communicate with staff regarding procedures
- Be honest and sensitive
- Encourage curiosity and exploration
- Reassure your child
- Use simple, nonthreatening language
- Listen to your child's concerns
- Give your child choices
- Help your child manage pain
- Comfort your child by touching, holding or rocking
- When appropriate, encourage play

## **Managing pain at home**

The tips you learned in the hospital also work at home. To get the best pain relief, remember these points:

- Use your medication only as directed. If pain is not relieved or if it gets worse, call your doctor. If the pain lessens, try taking less of the medication.
- Take medications on time. Most oral medications need at least 20 minutes to take effect.
- Time your medication so that you take it before beginning an activity.
- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables and drink plenty of liquids to increase healing and reduce constipation.

## Facts about pain and medication

Pain medications, when given with supervision, are safe and effective. Strong pain medications are rarely addictive when given in this manner.

Medications may be prescribed by your doctor that can help relieve any side effects.

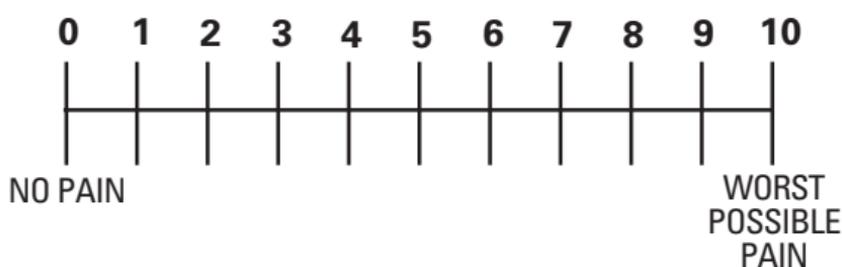
It is understood that pain may be intensified after operative procedures, certain activity levels and during the healing process.

Taking pain medication prior to walking or exercising with physical therapy can make that activity more tolerable and perhaps help speed your recovery.

### FACES PAIN SCALE



### NUMERICAL PAIN INTENSITY SCALE



## **Lakes Regional Healthcare, An Avera Partner**

### **Lakes Regional Hospital**

2301 Highway 71 South  
P.O. Box AB  
Spirit Lake, IA 51360-0159  
**712-336-1230**

### **Lakes Regional Community Health Center**

1003 21st St.  
Milford, IA 51351-0500  
**712-338-9998**

### **Lakes Regional Ambulance Service**

2301 Highway 71 South  
Spirit Lake, IA 51360-0159  
**Call 911 for emergencies.**

### **Dickinson County Public Health**

2301 Highway 71 South  
Spirit Lake, IA 51360-0159  
**712-336-2682**



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