



Medical Input

Although we understand that everyone would want their pain to be reduced or taken away, for some people that isn't possible. We will review what treatments and medicines you have tried before and consider if others might be useful for you to help manage the pain.

Injections: For particular pain conditions injections can help with pain levels for a certain amount of time and may allow to increase your activity levels ([Pain Information Leaflets](#))

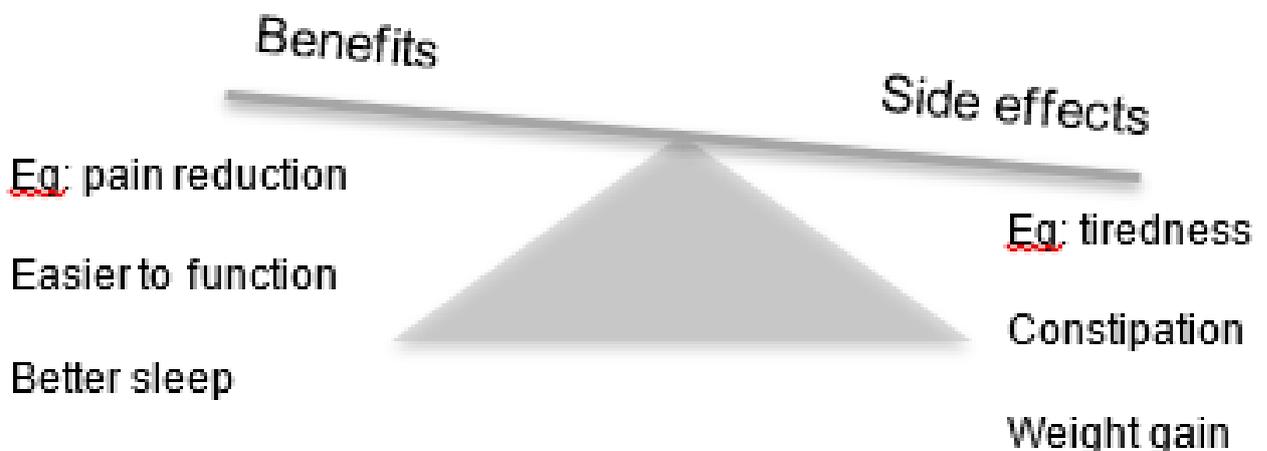
Medications: Most people with pain have tried many medications to help reduce their pain. Sometimes this can really help people to function with their long-term pain, but very often we find that people are on many medicines that are not helping and giving side effects. We will work through these with you and help find the right balance of benefit and side effects.

Medication for Pain Management

There are many different types of medicine that may be prescribed to try and help control pain. However, despite the name 'painkillers', it is rare to find a medicine that completely controls your pain. This may feel frustrating and it is important to have realistic expectations about how medication may help.

Many pain sufferers worry about taking medication in case masking pain means they will be more likely to damage their body. However, in chronic pain this is not the case as the pain is unhelpful and not a warning sign of damage. If the medication is able to control pain to some extent, it may help you move more, become more active and restore fitness.

We all respond differently to medication and what works for one person may have no effect for somebody else, so it is not helpful to compare your experience with others. Some people suffer debilitating side effects and feel better without medication, others find certain medications work much better than others or need a combination of medicine to experience pain relief.





Medication used to manage pain can be classified into different groups including:

<p>Simple analgesics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paracetamol• NSAIDS (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) e.g ibuprofen or naproxen, including gels	<p>NSAIDs can cause irritation to the lining of the stomach and it is generally recommended to take the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time, rather than long term use. NSAIDs can be useful to help manage flare ups, especially in osteoarthritis</p>
<p>Opioids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Codeine• Co-codamol = codeine plus paracetamol• Dihydrocodeine• Co-dydramol = dihydrocodeine plus paracetamol• Tramadol <p>Strong opioids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morphine• Oxycodone• Fentanyl• Buprenorphine	<p>Opioids can be associated with tolerance which means more of the drug is needed over time to have the same effect. In addition, your body can become dependent on the drug which means you can experience withdrawal effects if you stop taking them suddenly. However, this can be prevented by reducing the medication slowly. Neither tolerance nor dependence are the same as addiction or a sign of becoming addicted to a medication. Addiction is possible with opioids, but rare and generally occurs in those with a history of addiction. Addiction is when a person has a craving for opioids due to their side effects, not due to the need for pain control. Opioids are not generally recommended for long term use in chronic pain but may help in flare ups</p>
<p>Adjuvants or anti-neuropathics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amitriptyline• Duloxetine• Gabapentin• Pregabalin.	<p>Amitriptyline and duloxetine are classed as anti-depressants and used 'off license' for pain but recommended in guidance for managing neuropathic pain. Gabapentin and pregabalin are classed as anti-epileptic drugs, but are also licensed for neuropathic pain. Anti-neuropathics may take 6-8 weeks to have a full effect and need to be taken regularly. They often have side effects such as dry mouth or drowsiness, although these can wear off and become more tolerable with time.</p>

It is best to regularly review your use of medication and weigh up the benefits and side effects. As you become more confident in managing pain you may be able to reduce medication and still be able to cope well. Increasing activity levels and exercise is able to promote the natural release of chemicals that help in pain management, such as endorphins and serotonin.

Online resources

[Patient information leaflets | Faculty of Pain Medicine \(fpm.ac.uk\)](#)