

## **Pain Management**

### **What is Pain?**

Pain can be defined as a strong physical sensation of burning, stabbing, tearing, or throbbing. Emotional factors accompany the sensation of pain, such as depression, anxiety, fear, and stress. Pain can be acute or chronic in nature. Acute pain is experienced for only a short period of time and is often the result of injuries such as sprains or fractures, migraines, surgical procedures, or infections. Chronic pain lasts for more than three months and is often caused by nerve damage, arthritis, cancer, osteoporosis, or pain that remains following an injury. Pain can be mild, moderate, or severe. It signifies that there is damage in the body, and the extent of this pain can help you understand the severity of the damage.

### **Addressing Pain**

It is important that we treat pain as it influences our overall well-being. Not controlling pain can result in a prolonged healing process, interruptions to sleep, increased stress, anxiety, and depression. Since pain affects us both physically and emotionally it is important to take a holistic approach to the healing process. The following is a list of pain management techniques:

*Exercise:* Yoga and water aerobics are often recommended as a way to manage pain, especially back pain.

*Relaxation Techniques:* Meditation can be useful in reducing the experience of pain

*Psychotherapy:* Can help address the depression, stress and anxiety that accompanies pain.

*Medication:* Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents (NSAIDs) such as aspirin and ibuprofen are often used to treat pain, as are analgesics such as acetaminophen. Narcotic medications can be used to treat acute or post-operative pain, but are not recommended for the treatment of chronic pain due to their addictive potential. Antidepressants are used to treat pain associated with nerve related disorders as well as treat the depression associated with pain.

~Specialists involved in pain management include doctors, nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists~

### **Role of Psychology in Pain Management**

The experience of physical pain also has a psychological component. Factors such as stress, depression, fear, and anxiety can intensify our experience of pain. Pain can also result in feelings of hopelessness, sadness, and anger. Essentially, pain can influence all aspects of our life. It is important to develop skills that help you to deal with the effects of pain, thereby increasing your quality of life.

Psychotherapists can offer stress management techniques, as well as helpful ways to deal with the anxiety and depression associated with pain. In order to manage pain it is important to take a holistic approach to healing through addressing the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual impacts that pain has on your life.

## **Important Points on Pain Management**

- 1 Pain can be treated and this will improve your comfort and quality of life
- 2 Pain impacts all aspects of life, so it is important to take a holistic approach to healing
- 3 Treat pain early, which will make it easier to control!