

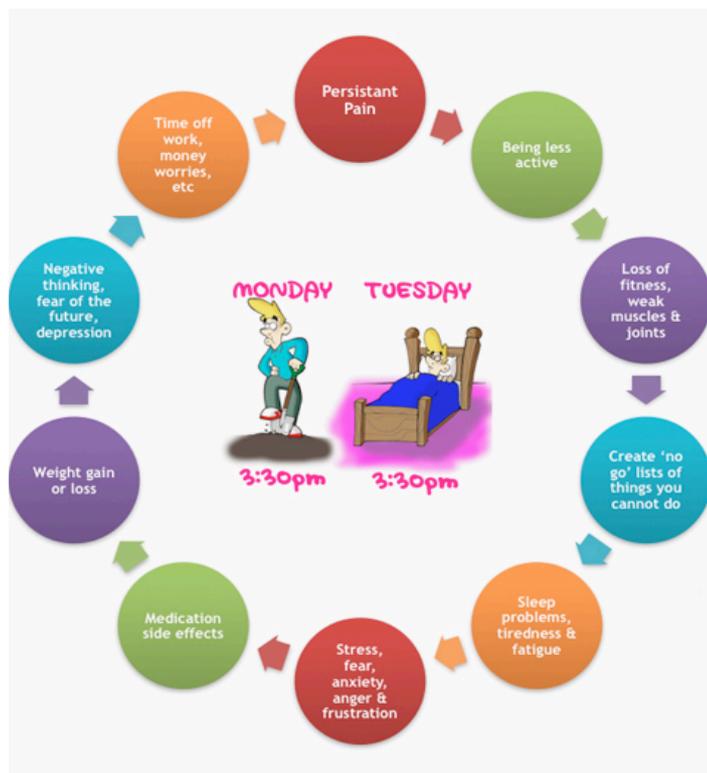


Your Health Matters! by Angela Kwok - Pharmacist at Cunderdin Pharmacy

Understanding Pain and the Treatment Options (Part 1)

According to the International Association for the Study of Pain, pain can be defined as
‘An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage’

- Pain is very much an individual experience based not only on the cause of the pain but a person’s past experiences with pain. What is painful for one person may not be painful for the next.
- Pain involves a mixture of psychological, environmental and behavioural features.
- **Pain is NOT a normal part of ageing BUT prevalence of persistent pain increases with Age & Illness**



Acute Pain	Chronic Pain
Lasts a few days to few weeks or reoccurs in brief intervals (e.g. period pain) but it disappears	Usually felt on most days for at least 3 months, continuous and recurrent
May be localised in area of damaged or radiating	Often difficult to pinpoint exact location of pain
Described as sharp, crushing or burning sensation	Described as dull or aching sensation
Acts as warning sign of tissue damage e.g. burns	Seems to have no apparent function
Examples: Headache, Sporting Injury, Burns, Migraine and Period Pain	Examples: Cancer, Osteoporosis, Low back pain. Can be compounded with tireless, insomnia, anxiety and depression

<https://pilatesplusphysio.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/image-pain-cycle.jpg>

There are a few risk factors called “**yellow flags**” which contribute to psychological changes in people with pain and makes them more likely to progress to persistent pain. The factors include:

- A belief that the pain they experience will potentially disable them
- Avoid activities because of the fear that movement will be painful
- Low mood which leads to social withdrawal
- An expectation that treatment by others will help more than anything they can do for themselves

Acute Injuries causing sprains or strains should be managed using the R.I.C.E.R protocol

- ✓ **REST** Rest reduces further damage. Avoid as much movement as possible to limit further injury
Do not put any weight on the injured part of the body.
- ✓ **ICE** Apply a Cold Pack to injury for 20 minutes every 2 hours and continue for the first 48-72 hours
Place cold pack wrapped in a towel onto the injured area. Do **NOT** apply cold pack directly to the skin
- ✓ **COMPRESSION** Apply Crepe Bandage, covering the injured area as well as the areas above and below.
Compression reduces bleeding and swelling, check the bandage is not too tight
- ✓ **ELEVATION** Elevate the injured area to stop bleeding and swelling; place it on a pillow for comfort and support
- ✓ **REFERRAL** Consider referring the injured person to a qualified professional such as a doctor or physiotherapist for precise diagnosis, ongoing care and treatment

Pain treatment includes **prescription, non-prescription, complementary and alternative medicines**

The most common active ingredients in non-prescription pain medications for **acute pain** are:
Paracetamol, anti-inflammatory agents such as NSAIDs & codeine (combine with paracetamol or NSAIDs)

Paracetamol: It can be effective for mild acute, chronic pain or to supplement other medicines. It is important to take no more than maximum dose (4 gram per day) as overdose can cause liver damage or even death.

Watch this space! Your Health Matters! Part 2 will discuss Other Pain Treatment Options in detail

