

## OVERVIEW

Pain is the most common reason why individuals seek medical care.

Unrelieved pain can negatively affect your physical functioning and your state of mind. These negative effects may include some or all of the following:

- Decreased mobility
- Impaired sleep
- Poor eating/Nutrition
- Decreased concentration
- Anxiety/Distress
- Depression
- Strained social interaction

Pain may also lead to further medical complications related to:

- Nausea and Vomiting
- Elevated blood pressure
- Impaired lung function
- Impaired digestive function
- Increased metabolic rate
- Impaired ability to fight infection
- Delayed healing

## WHAT IS PAIN MANAGEMENT

The term *pain management* refers to a comprehensive evaluation of the source of your pain and establishment of an appropriate treatment plan for pain control. A good pain management program requires teamwork. Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, chaplains, social workers, psychiatrists, and family members can all play an important part.

## PATIENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a patient at Naval Medical Clinic, Quantico, you can expect:

- Information about pain and pain relief.
- A concerned staff committed to pain prevention and management.
- Health professionals who respond quickly to reports of pain.
- Health professionals who believe your reports of pain.
- State-of-the-art pain management.

As a patient at Naval Medical Clinic, Quantico, we expect that you will:

- Ask your health care provider what to expect regarding pain and pain management.
- Discuss pain relief options with your doctor and nurse.
- Work with your doctor and nurse to develop a pain management plan.
- Ask for pain relief when pain first begins.
- Help your doctor and nurse assess your pain.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if your pain is not relieved.
- Tell your doctor or nurse about any worries you have about taking pain medications.

### *From the Commanding Officer:*

The entire staff of Naval Medical Clinic, Quantico, are trained and dedicated to ensuring that the best possible medical treatment is provided so you may be as "pain free" as possible. Please let me, or any of my staff members know how we can assist you.

NAVAL MEDICAL CLINIC  
3259 Catlin Ave.  
Quantico, VA 22134-6050



**STOP THE PAIN**  
*Pain Management  
Patient Information*

Naval Medical Clinic Quantico, is committed to assessing and treating your pain appropriately. Just because you have a medical problem does not mean you have to suffer. Many options exist to help manage your pain. You and your family need to be part of the team to treat your pain effectively.

This brochure has been written to provide you with the information you need to be an active partner in your pain management.

## Pain Location & Description

### PAIN ASSESSMENT

#### Pain Intensity

Just as it is important to have your pulse and blood pressure measured, it is equally important to have your pain assessed, if you are experiencing pain.

Everyone experiences pain differently. Only you can describe the amount and type of pain you have.

In order to help your medical team treat your pain, you will be asked to rate your pain by using this simple 0-10 scale or faces scale.



If this scale is confusing to you or any member of your family, please ask someone from your medical team to help explain it to you.

Individuals who are unable to use this scale, such as children or those who are too confused, can still be assessed for pain and treated appropriately. In situations, family members, as well as medical experts may be called upon to help.

In order to best treat your pain, your medical team may ask you for more information concerning your pain. These questions may include the following:

- Where is your pain located?
- Does your pain move to another area of your body?
- How would you describe your pain (sharp, dull, throbbing, aching, burning, etc.)?
- Is your pain always present or does it come and go?
- What makes your pain better?
- What makes your pain worse?
- Do you have trouble sleeping?
- Does your pain limit your ability to perform activities such as standing, walking, bathing, dressing, taking deep breaths, etc.?
- Does your pain limit your ability to participate in the therapy you are receiving?

### SETTING COMFORT GOALS

It is important that you and your medical team help establish a "comfort goal." This is a pain intensity level from **0-10**, which will allow you maximum pain relief, while preserving your function. Zero (0) means no pain and 10 means the most pain.

Certainly a goal at Naval Medical Clinic Quantico is to have everyone with zero pain. Unfortunately, depending on the underlying causes, this may not be possible. Therefore, a goal must be established.

**Example:** *SGT Jones recently had a knee operation. He can expect some discomfort, but when his pain is 5 or greater he is unable to participate in his physical therapy. Therefore, a reasonable comfort goal would be a pain rating of 3 or 4.*

### TREATMENT OPTIONS

Today, many modern medications, procedures and treatments are available to maximize pain relief. They may be used separately or in combination with one another. If your pain cannot be managed at NMCLQ, you will be referred for specialized care for pain.

#### Medications

*Opioids or Narcotics* are some of the most common and effective medications used for severe pain. Patients are often hesitant about using these medications for fear of addiction. Addiction is extremely rare when narcotics are used appropriately. If you have any concerns about addiction you should discuss them with your doctor or nurse.

Other pain-relief medications include:

- Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory medication (NSAID's)
- Corticosteroids
- Antidepressant medications
- Anticonvulsant/Seizure medications

Potential side effects may include:

Nausea, urinary retention, constipation, dry mouth, sedation, and blood thinning.

#### Non-Medication Treatments

*Ice and heat* may both be effective in relieving pain. These, however, should be used with caution in individuals with poor sensation or circulation.

Deep breathing exercises, visual imagery, and self-relaxation techniques are also very effective ways of managing pain. The staff at NMCLQ can help you develop these skills.