

# ACUTE PAIN MANAGEMENT + OPIOIDS

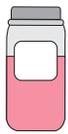
Guidelines for safe and effective pain management



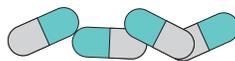
Patients and parents/caregivers may be reluctant to use pain medications due to concerns about potential side effects, concerns about addiction or a lack of understanding about how they work. To treat moderate to severe pain, stronger medications (opioids) may be needed.

Opioids (OH-pee-oyds) can be useful but there is a potential for increased harm from misuse, accidental poisoning or diversion (use by another person).

Pain relief is important and we suggest a combination of the following strategies called **the 3 P approach**:



## Pharmacotherapies



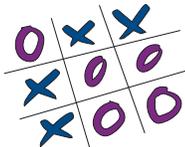
are pain relieving medicines. You should follow your doctor's instructions carefully for correct dosing and timing of all medications. Start with Acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol®) and Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory medications (NSAIDs such as Advil® or Motrin®) first. Use opioids only for short term moderate to severe pain.



## Physical Therapies



such as gentle touch, heat and/or cold, deep breathing, and imagery are effective. Breastfeeding, offering a pacifier and re-positioning for comfort can be used for smaller infants.



## Psychological Therapies



such as distraction, bubbles, books, cards, games, electronics (i.e. movies, music) and conversation are all good tools. Mindfulness, coaching and parental presence can also be helpful.

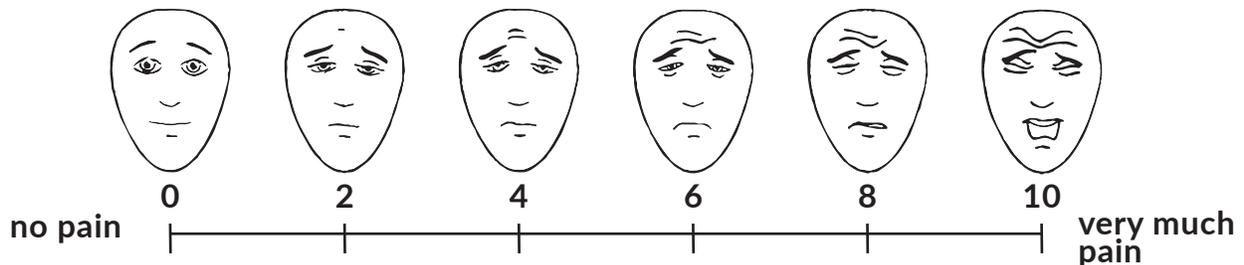


Using all of the above strategies together can reduce the amount of medications that will be needed and will reduce the pain.

**The Goal of Pain Management:** Our goal is for comfort and function, as we may be unable to completely remove the pain. Preventing the pain is better than treating it!

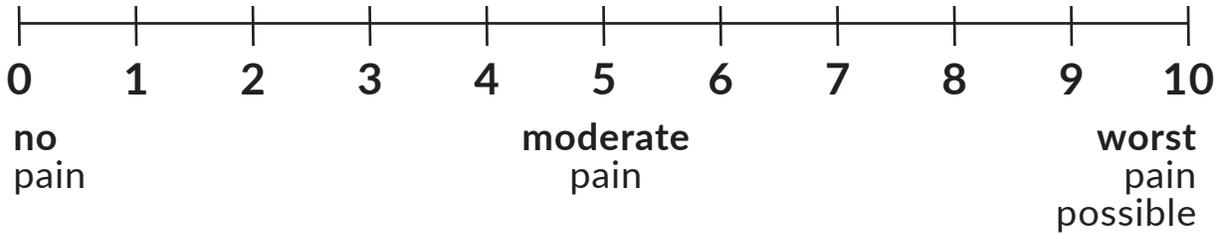
**HOW WE MEASURE PAIN:** There are different pain scales we use to assess the pain level.

**Faces Pain Revised (FPS-R) is for younger children (ages 4 - 12 years).**



The face (point to the left-most face) shows no pain.  
The faces show more and more pain (point to each one from left to right) up to the right-most faces which shows very much pain.\*

**The Numerical Rating Scale (NRS) is for older children or youth (ages 6+ years).**



**HOW WE MANAGE THE PAIN:** If your child or youth is expected to have moderate to severe pain, pain that lasts over time or constant pain, opioids may be needed along with other pain relief medications (i.e. Tylenol® and NSAIDS).

**GOOD PAIN CONTROL:** Will increase comfort during tests / treatments, after surgery and at home. It improves your function (ability to take deep breaths, cough and move easily) and may prevent chronic pain and a longer hospital stay.

Acetaminophen and NSAIDs can safely be used together and work better if taken together. You will be offered these medications, unless there is a reason it should not be used for your child/youth's condition or if your child/youth has an allergy to the medications.

If your child requires stronger medication, in addition to Tylenol® and NSAIDS, opioids may be prescribed. The opioid doses prescribed are based on your child's weight, and this increases the safety of taking this medication at home. We consider your child/youth's condition and their needs when prescribing opioids.

**For Mild / Moderate Pain:**

**Acetaminophen** + **Ibuprofen**  
(Tylenol®) (Advil® or Motrin®)

**If pain still persists:** your doctor may add opioids for moderate to severe pain for 3 – 5 days.  
Opioids ordered could be either Morphine or Hydromorphone (Dilaudid®)

**CONCERNS ABOUT OPIOIDS – What is Addiction?**

Addiction is mostly associated with a psychological dependence which is a craving in the brain for the drug. There is a very low risk of addiction when opioids are taken for less than 5 days. When opioids are taken for pain the craving that drives addiction does not exist.

**COMMON SIDE EFFECTS:** Opioids have some common side effects which are not signs of allergies. There are medications to treat the side effects that can be purchased over the counter from your pharmacy. Check with your doctor and / or pharmacist about the correct dosing and timing of these medications.



**SAFETY FIRST:**

- store all opioids out of reach of children in a safe place
- do not share your medication with anyone else
- opioids should be used only as prescribed
- return all unused opioids to your pharmacy for disposal
- uncommon side effects, such as slow/shallow breathing or difficulty breathing may be serious. Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department.