

## Pain Management



Pain is a signal from the nervous system indicating that something is not right. It's important to mention that each person perceives pain differently, even when the cause is the same. Pain can appear in different forms, such as mild, sharp, intense, or constant. Some of the most common areas where pain occurs include the chest, back, abdomen, and pelvis, among others.

### Types of Pain

Pain types are identified based on how long they last and how often they occur:

- **Acute pain:** Appears suddenly due to an injury, illness, or inflammation. It usually goes away once the cause is treated or healed; however, in some cases, it can develop into chronic pain. Examples: dental problems or broken bones.
- **Chronic pain:** Lasts more than three months. It may develop due to a medical condition, inflammation, injury, or other causes. This type of pain can affect all aspects of daily life, mood, and relationships. Examples: back problems or arthritis.
- **Episodic pain:** Appears from time to time and may occur alongside long-term medical conditions. Example: chronic migraine.

### What are the treatments for pain?

Pain is not always curable, although there are different ways to manage and treat it. The treatment will depend on the cause and the type of pain. Some of the most common options include medications, physical therapy, acupuncture and surgery, among others.

### What are analgesics?

Analgesics are medications that reduce or relieve pain. Today, there are different types of pain medications, each with its own benefits and possible side effects. Some can be purchased without a prescription, while others are stronger and require one, as is the case with certain opioids.



### What are non-pharmacological treatments?

- **Acupuncture:** Stimulates specific points on the body. The most common method involves inserting thin needles into the skin.
- **Electrical stimulation:** Uses a device that sends electrical currents to nerves or muscles. Its modalities include transcutaneous electrical stimulation, peripheral nerve stimulation, and deep brain or spinal cord stimulation.
- **Massage therapy:** Involves rubbing, pressing, or gently tapping the body's soft tissues with the goal of relaxing, reducing stress, and easing pain.
- **Meditation:** The intention to connect the mind with the body by focusing your attention on something, such as your breath.

This helps reduce stressful thoughts and feelings.



- **Physical therapy:** Uses methods such as heat, cold, massage, and exercises, among others. These help manage pain, improve mobility, and restore strength.
- **Psychotherapy:** Can help people with pain, especially chronic pain. It focuses on addressing negative thoughts and emotions that may intensify the perception of pain, as well as teaching stress-management skills and coping strategies.
- **Surgery:** Used to treat certain types of severe pain, for example, pain caused by back problems or injuries. It is important to note that there are always risks associated with undergoing a surgical procedure, and it is not always effective in relieving pain.



- **Relaxation therapy:** Helps reduce muscle tension and stress, lowers blood pressure, and contributes to pain management.

### General Recommendations

Depending on the type of pain and symptoms, it is possible to make lifestyle changes that help with its management. Some recommendations include engaging in physical activity, managing stress, maintaining a healthy diet, and keeping an appropriate weight, among others.

### Social and Emotional Aspects

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

#### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TTD 1-844-347-7804

APS Health

787-641-9133

### References

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pain.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/es/manage-treat-pain/tratamiento-con-opioides-y-diferentes-tipos-de-dolor.html>

Prepared by licensed health educators.  
Created in March 2026.

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