



# YOUR GUIDE TO CONTROLLING & MANAGING PAIN AFTER SURGERY

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

## Understanding Surgical Pain

Pain is an unpleasant feeling following surgery. Many patients experience pain differently (aching, cramping, sharp, dull, throbbing) and many procedures result in different types of pain. It is important that you work with your surgeon to develop an individualized pain management and treatment plan. Your understanding of post-surgical pain will improve your comfort, safety and satisfaction following surgery.

## Understanding Pain after Surgery

After your surgery, it is likely that your surgeon will prescribe a combination of medicines to control your pain. Opioids, such as morphine and codeine, are a type of drug called narcotics and work very well at controlling pain. Unfortunately, opioids often have unpleasant side effects including constipation, nausea, itchiness, sedation and dizziness. Therefore, other medications such as Tylenol and Motrin are usually given along with lower amounts of opioids in order to reduce the amount of unwanted side effects. Your medical care team will work with you to balance good pain control with the least side effects possible.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

**BEFORE Surgery,** ask your surgeon:

How much pain should I expect after surgery?

What type of pain will I experience?

When will the pain be at its worst?

How long will the pain last?

**AFTER Surgery,** tell your surgeon or nurse:

If your pain is above 4/10 and isn't getting better with medication (see next page)

If you are experiencing a new type of pain

If you are experiencing side effects of the pain medication you are taking

## Before you leave the hospital

Make sure you understand your surgeon's instructions regarding pain medication.

- What pain medicine am I taking?
- Why am I taking it?
- How should I take it?
- What are the side effects I should watch out for?
- When should I stop taking it?

## Once home, call your surgeon

- If your pain is not getting better with medication
- If you are experiencing unpleasant side effects of pain medication

# WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

You can dramatically influence the outcomes you experience following your surgery by actively participating in your own recovery. The actions you take can influence how soon you recover and how satisfied you are with your surgical experience.

You have the right to have your pain assessed and treated and we will work with you to develop a customized pain management plan.

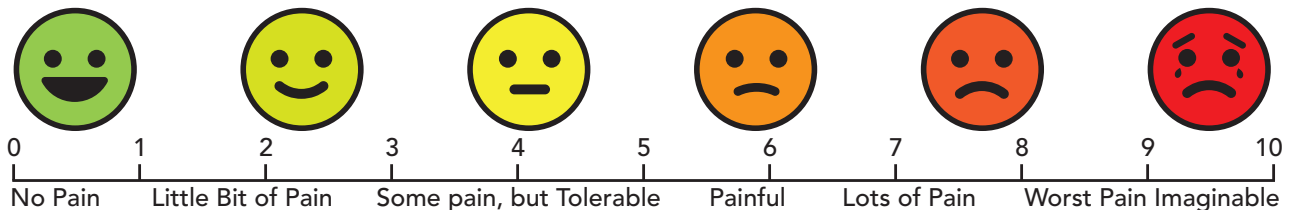
Unrelieved pain can lead to prolonged recovery, increased length of hospital stay, depression and sleeplessness.

# TOOLS TO HELP MANAGE YOUR PAIN

Keeping a Pain Diary will help your medical care team best control your pain

Patient Pain Diary														
Date	Pain Level (From 1-10 with 10 being the highest)								Side Effects					
	Morning		Noon		Evening		Night		Constipation	Dizziness	Nausea	Itchiness	Sleepiness	
	At Rest	With Movement	At Rest	With Movement	At Rest	With Movement	At Rest	With Movement						
Day of Surgery ___/___/___	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain					
1 Day After Surgery ___/___/___	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain					
2 Days After Surgery ___/___/___	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain					
3 Days After Surgery ___/___/___	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain	___/10 Location of pain					

Use the chart above to help keep track of your pain and any side effects you may be experiencing. It is important to note the different types of pain (dull, sharp, cramping) you are experiencing and when you feel that pain. Pain while at rest and pain during movement can often be different. Remember, our goal is to keep your pain at or below a 4/10.



Talk to your doctor about developing a pain goal or a targeted goal you wish your pain level to be, both at rest and with movement. Work with your doctor to develop a pain management plan that will work to achieve your pain goal and write it here:

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**Once you leave the hospital, please keep track of the pain medication you are taking**

<b>What is this medicine called?</b> MEDICATION NAME	<b>How much do I take?</b> DOSE	<b>How often do I take it?</b> FREQUENCY	<b>What is the medicine for?</b> REASON I'M TAKING	<b>Do I take it with food or water?</b> TAKE MEDICINE WITH

It is important that you understand all the pain medications you are taking. Use the chart above to help keep track of your pain medications.

## Common Medications, Ingredients and Side Effects

Here is a list of common medications used to treat pain. These may not be available at all hospitals. If you are given any of these, watch for any of the possible side effects, and make a note to tell your medical care team if you do.

<b>Medications with Few Side Effects (for Mild to Moderate Pain)</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Active Ingredient</b>	<b>Side Effects</b>	<b>Administration</b>
Tylenol	Acetaminophen	None	Pills, liquid or IV
Motrin	Ibuprofen	Some stomach discomfort	Pills, liquid or IV
Aleve	Naproxen	Some stomach discomfort	Pills
<b>Medications with Some Side Effects (for Mild, Moderate or Severe Pain)</b>			
Toradol	Ketorolac	Mild bleeding risk	Pills or IV
Neurontin	Gabapentin	Sedation	Pills
Lyrica	Pregabalin	Sedation	Pills
Local Anesthetics	Lidocaine, bupivacaine, ropivacaine	Numbness	Injection or patch
Steroids	Dexamethasone, hydrocortisone	Can increase glucose levels in diabetics	Pills or IV
Aspirin	Acetylsalicylic acid	Some stomach discomfort, easy bruising or bleeding	Pills
<b>Medications with More Side Effects (for Severe Pain)</b>			
Morphine	Morphine	Constipation, dizziness, sleepiness, nervousness, nauseous	Pills, liquid, IV or IV patient controlled
Dilaudid	Hydromorphone	Constipation, dizziness, sleepiness, nervousness, nauseous	Pills, liquid, IV or IV patient controlled
Fentanyl	Fentanyl	Constipation, dizziness, sleepiness, nervousness, nauseous, problems breathing	IV or patch
Vicodin/Lortab/Norco	Hydrocodone/acetaminophen	Constipation, dizziness, sleepiness, nervousness, nauseous	Pills
Percocet	Oxycodone/acetaminophen	Constipation, dizziness, sleepiness, nervousness, nauseous	Pills