

The Pain Clinic- patient information



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Persistent pain is pain that lasts longer than three months. Sometimes the cause of the pain is apparent but often there is no evidence of tissue damage. The pain usually varies in how severe it is from day to day and sometimes it can be very bad. This does not

mean that there has been any damage. Changes in the nervous system can lead to pain but sometimes pain itself can cause changes in the nervous system that lead to an increase in and maintenance of pain sensation.

Persistent pain can significantly interfere with quality of life and can be made worse by the anxiety, stress and anger that often accompany the pain.

Pain medication is often unhelpful and can have unpleasant side effects. It has been shown that the best management of patients with persistent pain is provided by a

multidisciplinary team of individuals who can address psychological as well as physical aspects of the condition to help patients manage their pain and improve their quality of life.

Pain can affect:

- the way people move
- how much they do
- how far they go
- how able they are to take part in activities
- how confident and optimistic they feel.
- relationships with others
- how well they sleep or concentrate
- how much they enjoy life.

As time goes on the effects of pain become more complicated.

Who are we?

- Doctors who specialize in pain management
- Psychologists
- Assistant Psychologists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Specialist nurses

What does a Pain Clinic do?

- Provide a multi-professional, patient specific assessment of your pain
- Develop an individual management plan with psychological and behavioural support if required to live a fuller life, in spite of pain. There may be different drugs/ medication or injections that can help, but even if this is an option many people still need help to manage their pain so that they can increase social and physical functioning with reduced disability. We work to support both you and your GP to manage your pain
- Promote self-management, with related benefits of fewer inappropriate medical appointments and re-admissions

Pain management aims to explain and reduce the effects of persistent pain by giving people information and helping them develop coping skills that improve their ability to manage pain. Pain management is not trying to cure pain, although some people say their pain has reduced afterwards.

We want to improve the quality of life of our patients. We work in partnership with our patients, encouraging them to actively participate in the decision making process regarding their treatments.

With support, many patients can start to exercise, engage with hobbies and resume work (full or part-time). We want to help people move forward and for this reason it is unhelpful for us to disable our patients by saying that they are unfit to work.

Your pain specialist may make a pain treatment plan for you and your GP to follow together. Your GP will be able to deal with queries and if you have a problem with medication you can also discuss this with your pharmacist