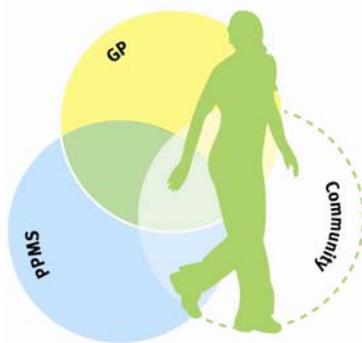


Persistent Pain Management Series

Managing your medicines

There are many medicines used to manage persistent pain and some people may find their quality of life, comfort and level of function improves with the use of medicine. Medicines may also work in different ways for different people. The Persistent Pain Management Service advocates the use of medication if it decreases your pain in order to increase your daily functioning. If your medication does not give this effect (e.g. avoidance of activity is continued) you will need to ask your general practitioner (GP) or pain medicine specialist to change the medication or dose to get the best effect.



Some medicines used to help people manage with persistent pain were originally designed for different conditions. Any time the medication label or information does not match your expectations it is important to have this explained by the prescriber.

Key message

Medicines work in different ways for different people.

Things to remember

- Take responsibility to learn about your medicine and any side effects.
- Be aware of the dose and how many times you should take it per day.
- Work with your GP and local pharmacist to make sure the medicine is helping you, and discuss any problems you may be having with it.
- If you hear about new or different medicines, discuss these with your doctor or pharmacist.
- Write down a list of the medicines you take (including vitamins, supplements and other complementary and alternative medicines), and have this ready for when you see your healthcare professional.

Side effects

All medicines can cause side effects, but this does not mean that will happen to every person. The benefits of pain medication (e.g. more mobility, improved sleep, pain relief) need to be weighed against possible side effects (e.g. drowsiness, nausea, weight gain).

If you experience side effects you may need to:

- change your medicine
- change the dosage of your medicine
- try to cope with the side effect
- relieve the side effect (e.g. use a laxative for constipation).

It is important you consult with your GP before making any changes to the type or amount of medicine you are taking.



MAKE SURE YOU TELL YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST IF YOU ARE HAVING ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE MEDICINES YOU ARE TAKING

Tips on taking your medicine

- Take your medicine as they have been prescribed to you by your GP to prevent extreme episodes of pain.
- Get into the habit of taking your medicine at the same time every day.
- Purchase a dosing box which displays the days of the week and times of day.
- Always talk to your GP or local pharmacist if you have any questions.
- Make taking medications a habit or a routine.
- Keep your medications safely away from others especially children.
- Plan for medication use when travelling.

Please write any questions you may have in the space below.



THE JOHNSON'S NEIGHBOURS LOOKED FORWARD TO THE 7.30PM MEDICINE REMEMBRANCE RITUAL

Notes

Example: Will this new medication react with what I am currently taking?

Additional resources

National Prescribing Service

www.nps.org.au

Webstercare and Webster-pak

www.webstercare.com.au