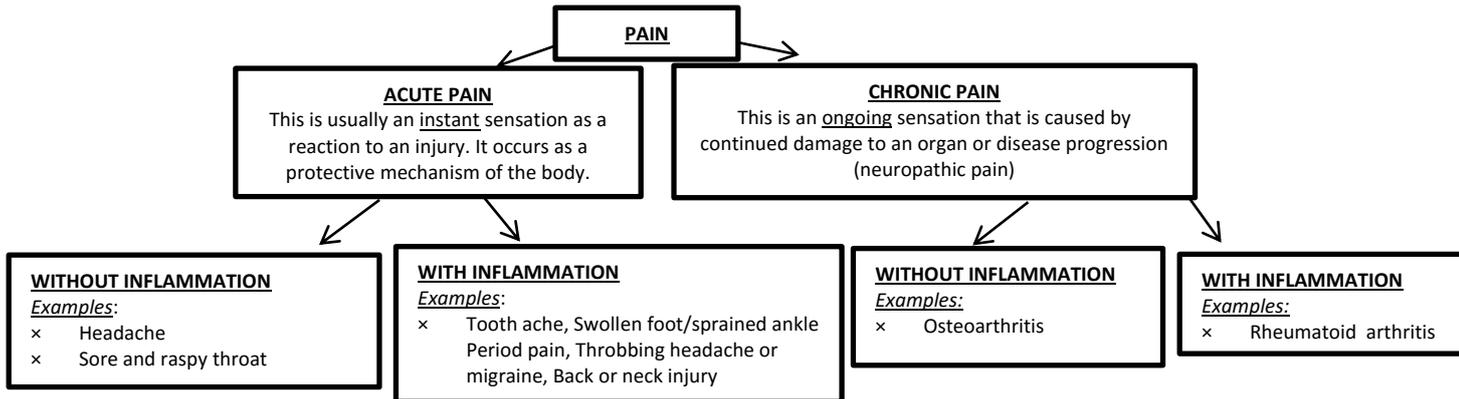


❖ PAIN

What exactly is pain?

Pain is a physical symptom or sensation that you feel because of an 'acute' injury or a more serious underlying condition. There are several types of pain but the most important factor that determines what treatment to use is whether or not there is inflammation present.



What is inflammation?

This is where an area becomes red, swollen and hot usually because of an injury or infection. It is the body's way of protection; to fight the 'intruder'.

How do you treat these different types of pain?

I have listed the options that I usually recommend in the corresponding order. You will notice that I always use a 'step-up' approach because I believe that the less medications that are in the system the better it is for you.

PAIN WITHOUT INFLAMMATION:

This is pain that occurs without any swelling, redness or heat associated with it so it is safely treated by:

OPTION 1

Paracetamol 500mg.

Take 1 to 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours.

*Available in supermarkets and pharmacies
*Non drowsy and gentle on stomach

OPTION 2

Paracetamol 665mg

Take 1 to 2 tablets every 6 to 8 hours, with a maximum of 6 tablets in 24 hours

*Available in pharmacies only
*Non drowsy and gentle on stomach

Or Paracetamol 500mg in combination with

OPTION 3

Codeine

Take 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours

*Some evidence suggesting that the low available OTC is not high enough to relief can become habit forming
*Available from pharmacist only
*Can be drowsy and cause constipation
*Short term treatment OTC only
*Can interact with various medications

Or Paracetamol 500mg in Combination with

OPTION 4

Codeine + Doxylamine 10mg

Take 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours

*Available from pharmacist only

- *Causes severe drowsiness
- *Short term treatment only
- *The Doxylamine is a 'relaxant' antihistamine to make you drowsy and possibly relax the muscles
- *Can interact with various medications

What products are available?

INGREDIENT	PRODUCT	BENEFITS
Paracetamol 500mg	Panadol, Herron Paracetamol	Non drowsy and gentle on the stomach. Does not interact with most medications when taken correctly. Often is sufficient to control pain alone with minimal side effects for most people
Paracetamol 665mg	Panadol Osteo	A much higher dose of Paracetamol so it lasts much longer in the body and requires you to take less number of tablets. Much easier to remember taking, especially for chronic pain
Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 8/10mg	Panadeine tablets, Mersyndol Day Strength, Panadeine soluble	Extra Codeine acts as an extra pain reliever and works in a different way but may cause drowsiness and constipation. Can be habit forming so only recommended for short-term use. Soluble Panadeine is good to gargle if a sore throat and works quicker than the normal tablets
Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 15mg	Panadeine Extra	The extra 15mg of Codeine works as an even stronger pain reliever but causes drowsiness and constipation. Can interact with various medications
Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 8/10mg + Doxylamine 10mg	Mersyndol Night, Fiorinal and Fiorinal Dental, Dolased, Mydol, Strong Pain Plus	The extra ingredient acts to cause drowsiness and help with aiding recovery e.g. migraine. It can also be a muscle relaxant to help with neck/back pain. Short term use only, and can interact with various medications

PAIN WITH INFLAMMATION:

This is when you have pain with swelling, redness and/or heat often caused by an injury or infection. The aim of treatment is to reduce inflammation as well as removing pain.

Just like antihistamines, anti-inflammatories respond differently to different people. For instance Advil works amazingly well for me but Voltaren rapid 25mg does not work at all despite it being stronger in theory, so it can be a matter of trial and error until you find one that agrees with your stomach and controls the pain well.

Treatment for Adults:

OPTION 1

Ibuprofen 200mg.
Take 1 to 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours immediately after food, with a maximum of 6 tablets in 24 hours.

- *Needs to be taken after food
- *Care is needed in asthma, stomach & kidney conditions; can interact with various medicines
- *Available in supermarkets and pharmacies

OPTION 2

Aspirin 300mg
Take 1 to 2 tablets every 3 to 6 hours immediately after food, with a maximum of 6 tablets in 24 hours

- *Not to be used in children under 16 Years of age
- *Needs to be taken after food
- *Care is needed in asthma, stomach & kidney conditions; can interact with various medicines
- *Available in supermarkets and pharmacies

OPTION 3

Diclofenac 12.5mg first then 25mg
Take 2 tablets immediately after food and then 1 tablet every 8 hours.

- *12.5mg available in pharmacies
- *25mg available from pharmacist
- *Same precautions as above

Mefanamic Acid 250mg
Take 1 to 2 tablets immediately after food every 4 to 6 hours.

OPTION 4

*Marketed for period pain but in theory can be used for all pain and inflammation
*Same precautions as above

OPTION 5

Naproxen 275mg
Take 1 to 2 tablets immediately after food every 4 to 6 hours.

*Marketed for period pain but in Theory can be used for all situations
*Same precautions as above

Then Ibuprofen 200mg in combination with Codeine

OPTION 6

Codeine
Take 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours immediately after food, with a maximum of 6 tablets

*Some evidence suggesting that it does not provide much more pain relief and can be habit forming
*Can cause drowsiness and constipation
*Same precautions as above
*Available from pharmacist only

Then Aspirin 300mg in Combination with Codeine

OPTION 7

Codeine
Take 1-2 tablets every 3 to 6 hours immediately after food, with a maximum of 6 tablets

*Same as above

What products are available?

INGREDIENT	PRODUCT	ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES
<i>Ibuprofen</i>	Nurofen, Nurofen Zavance, Liquid caps, Period pain*, Migraine*, Tension headache*, back pain*, Herron blue, Advil liquid caps	Zavance works twice as fast as regular Nurofen, all the * ones are exactly the same as each other; they are coated in Lysine to help them work faster but they are all the same strength as regular Nurofen.
<i>Aspirin 300mg</i>	Solprin, Disprin, Aspro	Can be dissolved to work much more quickly or swallowed or chewed depending on what you prefer
<i>Aspirin 500mg</i>	Aspro extra strength	Is stronger than usual Aspirin; from pharmacies only
<i>Ibuprofen 200mg + Codeine 10mg</i>	Nurofen Plus, Panafen Plus	May cause drowsiness
<i>Aspirin 300mg + Codeine 10mg</i>	Disprin Forte, Aspalgin, Codis	May cause drowsiness and must be taken with food
<i>Diclofenac</i>	Voltaren Rapid 12.5mg	Long acting anti-inflammatory
	Voltaren Rapid 25mg	Strongest anti-inflammatory available OTC
<i>Mefanamic Acid 250mg</i>	Ponstan	Can help reduce cramping and the amount of bleeding, which can be extremely beneficial for period pain.
<i>Naproxen 275mg</i>	Naprogesic	Excellent for period pain.

What else should I know about PAIN?

- If pain persists longer than 48 hours it is vital that you see your doctor. It may be a sign of something more serious such as an infection or an injury and should be reviewed rather than just ‘masking’ the pain.
- Headaches that become more frequent or change in nature or you are developing more symptoms must be reviewed by your doctor. These could be signs of a more serious condition that should not be ignored.
- If you are healthy and have no pre-existing health conditions and you have not had any pain relief from Paracetamol alone (Option1) after 30 minutes; then you may add Ibuprofen after eating as well. (**Option 2**)

But you CANNOT take two anti-inflammatories, i.e. cannot take Aspirin and Ibuprofen together (one or the other!).

If Paracetamol and Ibuprofen in combination do not work, then you can add Codeine to the equation but you need to speak to your pharmacist

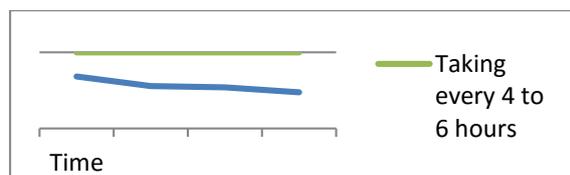
After 30 minutes

OPTION 1: Paracetamol 2 x 500mg tablets	➔	not working then you can add
OPTION 2: Paracetamol + Ibuprofen	➔	not working; then speak to your pharmacist

- You can take anti-inflammatories for pain without inflammation. However, I have ranked Paracetamol as the first because it has less side effects and risks/precautions than others. The philosophy is and will always be to start low and work your way up if you need to.
- Although it is in the Drug Profile section in detail, it is very important to know some cautions with anti-inflammatory medications:
 - × If you have asthma and have NOT taken the anti-inflammatory medication before, then remember they can trigger asthma in some people. It does not happen to everybody or with every anti-inflammatory. If it does however cause this, then you must stop taking them immediately.
 - × Anti-inflammatories reduce the production of a substance called *Prostaglandins* which protects the stomach lining. So despite taking them with food anti-inflammatories can destroy this protective lining and can cause stomach ulcers if taken long-term. So, if you suffer from stomach ulcers or similar, you must not take these and it will be best to discuss options with your doctor. If you are taking these tablets on an on-going basis, then you must keep in mind that this is a real and likely consequence so chat to your doctor about managing your chronic pain in safer ways
 - × If you take blood thinning medication; take care as anti-inflammatory medications can also thin the blood
 - × Extreme care must be taken if you take blood pressure medication. Firstly, they can cause fluid retention and ultimately increase the blood pressure long term. Secondly, there is a certain combination of blood pressure medication with anti-inflammatories that can lead to severe kidney failure.

HINTS AND TIPS FOR PAIN MANAGEMENT:

- It is best to take medications regularly (every 4 to 6 hours) rather than waiting until pain comes back, because it provides a stable amount of pain relief and makes you feel better whilst your body heals



- If the pain is from an acute injury then apply the RICER technique to aid recovery (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevate and Relief). You should apply ice for 10 minutes of every hour for the first 48 hours to reduce inflammation. After this you should apply heat in the form of a heat pack/wheat pack/heat providing cream such as Dencorub or Deep Heat to help relax and keep your muscles mobile.
- It is important to fix the cause of pain; e.g. if you have low blood sugars and this is causing a headache then you should eat a quick acting glucose such as Glucogel jelly beans or orange juice. If it is caused by being dehydrated then keep your fluids up. If it is caused by the heat, then ensure you cool the body down with cold compresses/fluid and get out of the sun.
- If pain becomes recurrent (e.g. headaches), keep a diary of what trigger factors are causing them to occur. For some people it can be caused by eating chocolate, certain wines, cheeses, not enough sleep, hunger or preservatives. It can be caused by eye-strain, which can be alleviated by visiting your optometrist. It may also require having a blood test to correct any nutritional deficiencies that may be the issue. They can be caused by neck/back strain due to posture or misalignment which can be assessed and then corrected by a physiotherapist or chiropractor. Once you have ascertained the cause then it will mean that you are giving your body a rest from taking regular medications than simply mask the pain. The fewer chemicals that your body has to process are best I say!!
- Since pain can affect ones quality of life it is important to manage the physical and emotional aspects of it. It is important to have a supportive network of family, friends and medical staff to talk about any issues that you are having in a non-judgemental way.
- There are also a number of alternatives to medication to obtain optimal pain management. It will be a matter of testing them out and seeing which treatment suits you best. Some examples include:
 - Acupuncture, Hydrotherapy, Physiotherapy, Chiropractic, Reflexology, TENS machines, Relaxation and stress management techniques and Psychologist to help develop strategies to manage pain symptoms well

What's the big deal with Codeine?

Codeine containing products can only be bought after speaking with a pharmacist. It should only be used short-term because of the possible side effects, its ability to interact with medications and the fact that it can give you rebound headaches if you continuously use it so it becomes a bit of a cycle!

Although people get frustrated that pharmacists ask so many questions about why they are needing codeine and if they take any other medications or have other medical conditions, it is only for your safety and benefit that they make sure the product is suitable for you. Unfortunately it has become an area of misuse in the community and I have seen people go to great lengths and stories to get it even though studies show it may not be providing any further pain relief at such a dose.

Why are some medications only available in pharmacies and not in the supermarket?

You will notice not just with pain relief but with quite a few medications, there are products that you can only get from pharmacies. The reason is that different active ingredients have different classifications based on their possible safety, the likelihood of having side effects and the 'potential' of it being overused or abused.

Some medications can only be sold in pharmacies; other products are 'Pharmacist only Medicines', which means that you can only obtain them after speaking with a pharmacist so that they can tell you how to correctly take them as well as give you a chance to ask them anything about your health or the medication.

What other sources of help and resources are there?

There are quite a few national resources that can help:

- ✓ National Chronic Pain Information Line 1800 218 921
- ✓ NURSE-ON-CALL 1300 606 024
- ✓ Medicine Line 1300 633 424
- ✓ Pain Australia Organisation Consumer section
- ✓ Australian Pain Society
- ✓ Chronic Pain Australia