



## YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO PAIN MANAGEMENT

All patients at Northfield Hospital have a right to pain management. We'll work with you and your family to manage your pain. We believe that managing your pain is an important part of your care.

*As a patient, you can expect:*

- information about pain and measures for relief of pain.
- a concerned staff, committed to the prevention and management of pain.
- health professionals who respond quickly to reports of pain.

*As a patient, we expect that you will:*

- ask your doctor or nurse what to expect regarding your pain and the management of your pain.
- discuss with your doctor or nurse the options for relief of your pain.
- work with your doctor and nurse to develop a plan for management of your pain.
- ask for pain relief when your pain first begins.
- help the doctor and nurse to measure your pain.
- tell the doctor or nurse if your pain has not been relieved.

### INFORMATION ABOUT PAIN

**Pain is a sensation that hurts.** —It can be described as stabbing, pinching, aching, causing discomfort, distress, or agony. It may be steady or it may come and go.

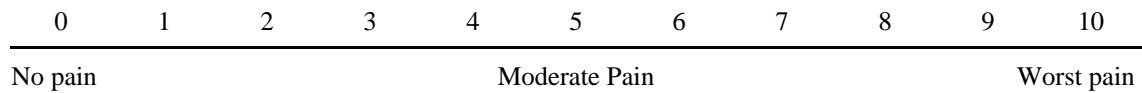
**Pain may be acute or chronic.** —Acute pain, such as the pain caused by surgery, may be severe at times, but will gradually lessen as the body heals. Chronic pain, such as the pain caused by arthritis or cancer, may range from mild to severe and may persist for long periods of time.

**It is important to know that, with the treatments available today, most pain can be well-controlled, no matter the type or amount of pain you may feel.** —When your pain is well-controlled, you can be more active, sleep better, eat better, and be more positive. If you are recovering from surgery, controlling your pain can help you get well faster.

**You are an important part of managing your pain.** —Without your help, your physician and nurse cannot measure the pain you are experiencing. You need to communicate this information to the doctor or nurse.

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Using the number scale (below) to rate your pain, your physician and nurses will teach you to describe the type and amount of pain you are experiencing.



*Talk to your doctor or nurse, if:*

- you are experiencing pain.
- you have questions about controlling your pain.
- you have taken pain medicine and it is not working.

**The best time to manage pain is when it first begins.** —If you know your pain may worsen with an activity, take pain medicine first to prevent the pain. If pain does occur, don't wait for it to get worse before asking for pain medicine. Pain medicine often works better on a regular schedule rather than taking it "as needed" in response to pain.

**Your pain is unique to you.** —Pain can be affected by how you are feeling emotionally, spiritually, or if you are concerned about your job, finances, children, etc. It is important to discuss your concerns with your health care team. They can work with you to address the issues that may be causing you additional stress and pain.

**There may be other treatments.** —Your doctor or nurse may suggest that you also try other treatments, along with your pain medicine. Treatments such as cold packs, heating pads, massage, and relaxation exercises can often help in relieving your pain.

**Addiction is a common concern that is often expressed about the use of pain medicines called *opioids* (narcotics).** —In fact, studies show that drug addiction is extremely rare in a person who is taking pain medicine for pain management.