

# Managing Pain While You're in the Hospital

When you're in the hospital after a surgery or procedure, or because of an injury or a health problem, you may have pain.

But medicines can do a lot to help control your pain.

Your care team will be there to make sure that your pain is under better control and you're as comfortable as possible.

And you can help by letting your care team know how you're feeling and when you're having pain so they can do everything they can to manage it and help you get better.

You may get medicines on a regular schedule to help prevent or relieve your pain before it gets bad.

Once pain starts to get bad, it can be harder to control.

So it's best to tell your care team as soon as your pain starts to flare up before it gets severe.

Your doctor and nurses will help to make sure you get the right amount of medicine.

Be sure to tell them if you have any side effects from your medicines such as feeling nauseated or constipated.

You may be able to take a different medicine or dose.

You're the only one who knows exactly what your pain feels like, so try to describe it as clearly as you can to make sure you're getting the treatment you need.

When describing your pain, think about questions like ...

Is the pain constant?

Or does it come and go?

Where is the pain?

And what does it feel like?

For example, is it dull, sharp, aching, shooting, or burning?

And has the pain changed since the last time you talked to your nurse?

Your doctor or nurse may ask if your pain is mild, moderate, or severe.

Or you may be asked to rate your pain level on a scale.

Some pain scales use pictures. Others use numbers from 0 to 10.

Using a pain scale can help you describe exactly how much pain you're having and how your pain is changing over time, so your care team can adjust your medicines, if needed.

Remember, the key to keeping your pain under better control is telling your doctor and care team how you're feeling.

Working together will help your care team keep you as comfortable as possible and help relieve your pain.