

# Questions to Ask Your Physician About Pain

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Asking your healthcare provider questions at any phase of your treatment will help you take an active role in managing your (or your child's) care. If you do not understand any part of the information your healthcare provider gives you, ask him or her to explain it in another way.

**1.** What could be the cause of my pain?

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**2.** What options would you recommend for treating my pain (medications and non-drug therapies)?

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**3.** How long does it take the medicine to start working? (called "onset of action") How much relief should I expect from this treatment?

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**4.** What if I forget to take the medicine?

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**5.** Should I take my medicine with food? Are there any foods or beverages I need to avoid? Will my pain medication interfere with other supplements and medications I'm taking?

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**6.** If my pain is not relieved by the amount of pain medication you prescribed, can I take more? If I can take more, how much should I take? Should I call you before increasing the dose?

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**7.** Is it safe to drink alcoholic beverages, drive or operate machinery after I have taken pain medicine?

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**8.** What can I do to ease or prevent side effects from this medication, such as, constipation or fatigue?

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**9.** How should I store these medications in my home?

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**10.** Are there certain activities I should avoid? Will certain exercises help?

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- 11.** What other pain treatment options should be considered? Are there additional specialists who should be part of my pain care team (nurses, physical therapists, counselors, nutritionists)? Can you recommend any qualified practitioners who offer complementary therapies, such as acupuncture, massage, yoga or hypnosis?

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- 12.** Do you have suggestions for how I can talk to friends and family members about my pain?

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## Notes

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