

## SUMMARY

## DECISION SUPPORT

## PATIENT EDUCATION/SELF MANAGEMENT

**CHRONIC PAIN: WHAT YOU SHOULD DO****IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:**

- One of the hardest things to accept may be that there is no cure for your pain.
- You will have good days and bad days, even with treatment.

**TIPS FOR COPING WITH YOUR PAIN:****AVOID NEGATIVE SELF-TALK**

- Studies have shown that what we say to ourselves (inside our heads) can affect our idea of pain.
- Turning negative thoughts into positive ones takes practice, but is worth the effort.

**IMPROVE SLEEP**

- Your primary care provider and mental health clinician will provide therapies to manage problems which may be affecting your sleep.
- Physical activity, avoidance of naps, and regular sleep habits are also helpful.

**MANAGE STRESS**

- Do what you can to stay healthy and stay positive.
- Seek and accept support.

**INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

- Many people in pain are afraid to exercise, but physical activity actually helps reduce pain.
- Exercise also improves mood, sleep, and general well being by releasing the body's own "feel good" hormones – called endorphins.
- Exercise has a part to play in weight control too, so it really does have a lot to offer.
- Take your time and don't push through the pain: that's not helpful and can lead to flare-ups.
- Start with a few repetitions and slowly build up.
- Commit to daily practice for three months before judging whether or not this is helping! If you're not fit, it may take this much time to see an improvement. Don't give up!

**PRACTICE RELAXATION**

- Relax your breathing—Breathe in slowly, deeply through your nose, and breathe out slowly, through your mouth, repeat until you feel more relaxed.
- Relax your muscles—Focus on the muscle you want to relax.
- Relax your mind: Create a happy, peaceful place in your mind where you can close your eyes and visit, when you need to relax.
- Listen to soothing, calm music.

**IF YOU ARE ON MEDICATION**

- Take your medication exactly as prescribed.
- Tell your medical provider all of the prescription and over the counter medicines you take.
- Do NOT drink alcohol; use illegal drugs; take sleep aids; or muscle relaxants.
- Never take medications that are not prescribed to you.
- Discuss all side effects and concerns you have with your medical provider.



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**CHRONIC PAIN: PREPARING FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE VISIT PART I**

Many things can affect your pain.

These can include:

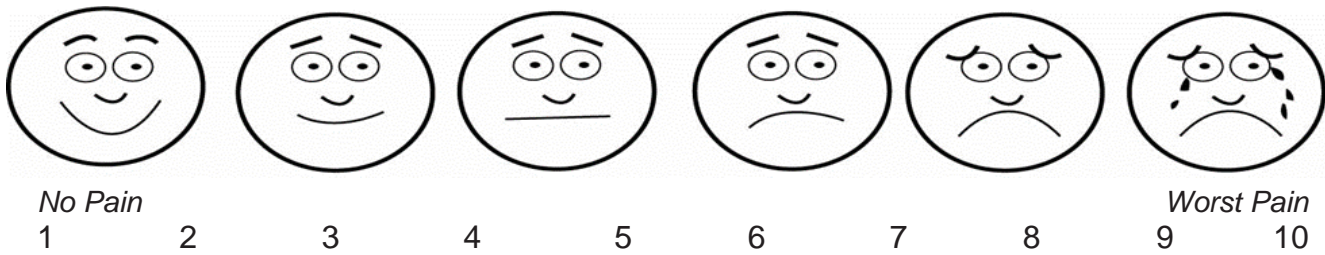
- Stress
- Poor Sleep
- Depression
- Anger
- Feeling alone
- Sadness
- Fear
- Being worried/anxious

When you visit with your Health Care Team, be ready to talk about:

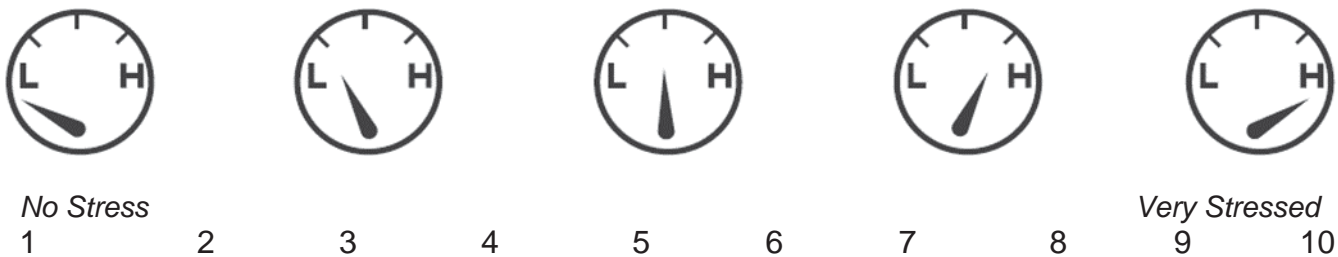
1. What do you think is wrong?
2. Any new symptoms or improvements since your last visit?
3. How is the pain affecting your daily life?
4. Any other questions?

Before your visit, look at each section below and circle the number that most closely matches how you have felt in that area over the last 2-3 weeks.

**Pain Level**



**Stress**



**Sleep**



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**CHRONIC PAIN: PREPARING FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE VISIT PART 2**

Look at each section below and circle the number that most closely matches how you have felt in that area over the last 2-3 weeks.

**Fear of Pain**



No Fear

Very Afraid

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Hunger**



Eating Normal Meals

Not Hungry

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Mood**



Happy & Calm

Sad, Depressed, or Anxious

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Activity**



Normal Activity

No Activity

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Using Medications as Prescribed**



Always Take As Directed

Do Not Take As Directed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10