Myalgia, Muscle Pain

Myalgia is the medical term for muscle pain. It is a symptom of many things. Nearly everyone at some time in their life has this. The most common cause for muscle pain is overuse or straining and more so when you are not in shape. Injuries and muscle bruises cause myalgias. Muscle pain without a history of injury can also be caused by a virus. It frequently comes along with the flu. Myalgia not caused by muscle strain can be present in a large number of infectious diseases. Some autoimmune diseases like lupus and fibromyalgia can cause muscle pain. Myalgia may be mild, or severe.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of myalgia are simply muscle pain. Most of the time this is short lived and the pain goes away without treatment.

DIAGNOSIS

Myalgia is diagnosed by your caregiver by taking your history. This means you tell him when the problems began, what they are, and what has been happening. If this has not been a long term problem, your caregiver may want to watch for a while to see what will happen. If it has been long term, they may want to do additional testing.

TREATMENT

The treatment depends on what the underlying cause of the muscle pain is. Often anti-inflammatory medications will help.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If the pain in your muscles came from overuse, slow down your activities until the problems go away.
- Myalgia from overuse of a muscle can be treated with alternating hot and cold packs on the muscle affected or with cold for the first couple days. If either heat or cold seems to make things worse, stop their use.
- Apply ice to the sore area for 15 to 20 minutes four times per day while awake for the first 2 days of muscle soreness, or as directed. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Regular gentle exercise may help if you are not active.
- Stretching before strenuous exercise can help lower the risk of myalgia. It is normal when beginning an exercise regimen to feel some muscle pain after exercising. Muscles that have not been used frequently will be sore at first. If the pain is extreme, this may mean injury to a muscle.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have an increase in muscle pain that is not relieved with medication.
- You begin to run a temperature.
- You develop nausea and vomiting.
- You develop a stiff and painful neck.
- You develop a rash.
- You develop muscle pain after a tick bite.
- You have continued muscle pain while working out even after you are in good condition.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

Any of your problems are getting worse and medications are not helping.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.

- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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