Chronic Pain Management

Managing chronic pain is not easy. The goal is to provide as much pain relief as possible. There are emotional as well as physical problems. Chronic pain may lead to symptoms of depression which magnify those of the pain.

Problems may include:

- Anxiety.
- Sleep disturbances.
- Confused thinking.
- Feeling cranky.
- Fatigue.
- Weight gain or loss.

Identify the source of the pain first, if possible. The pain may be masking another problem. Try to find a pain management specialist or clinic. Work with a team to create a treatment plan for you.

MEDICATIONS:

- May include narcotics or opioids. Larger than normal doses may be needed to control your pain.
- Drugs for depression may help.
- Over-the-counter medicines may help for some conditions. These drugs may be used along with others for better pain relief.
- May be injected into sites such as the spine and joints. Injections may have to be repeated if they wear off.

THERAPY MAY INCLUDE:

- Working with a physical therapist to keep from getting stiff.
- Regular, gently exercise.
- Cognitive or behavioral therapy.
- Using complementary or integrative medicine such as:
  - Acupuncture.
  - Massage, Reiki or Rolfing.
  - Aroma, color, light or sound therapy.
- Group support.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

http://www.painfoundation.org.
American Chronic Pain Association http://www.thealpa.org.

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