



Self Management & Chronic Pain

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If you require the information in this leaflet in a community language or alternative format

e.g. Braille, easy read or audio please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at:

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Self Management & Chronic Pain

- Chronic Pain is complicated.
- Pain can be affected by physical, emotional and social factors.
- Self-management helps you deal with life when you have chronic pain.
- Self-management is about learning skills to gain control of your pain.
- This includes managing symptoms and improving physical wellbeing.
- It may require making changes to have a better quality of life.




Pace
your
activities!

- **Pacing Activities:** - You may notice that you have 'good and bad' days. On a 'good day' you may feel tempted to over do it. This leads to increased pain or a 'flare up'. Prevent this by doing tasks a little at a time. Or taking short breaks to help to prevent a pain flare up.




Learn to
relax!

- **Relaxation:** - Pain can lead to muscle tension. This can start to become a habit. Learning to relax can help reduce physical tension. This helps by lowering the amount of adrenaline in the body. It can also help sleep.



Take
your mind
off things!

- **Distraction:** - Shifting your attention away from pain can help. Enjoyable activities releases feel good chemicals called endorphins. These help you to feel better both physically and emotionally.



Make a
'flare up'
plan....

- **Plan your day:** - Think about the things that you enjoy doing. Try to plan enjoyable activities into your day which are fun. This can give you a sense of satisfaction. *Be careful to pace.* Taking short breaks as necessary.

- **Plan for set-backs:** - Being prepared will help you to take action quickly. This helps you to achieve a sense of control over your pain.

- **An example of a 'flare up' plan:** -

Change position regularly.
Use a hot water bottle.
Use a TENS machine.
Temporarily use maximum recommended dose of medication.
Focus on pleasurable activities whilst remembering to pace.
Listen to a relaxation CD some more.

- Self management helps you live your life the way you want to.
 - Further information is available from:
 - <http://sites.google.com/site/fifepaininfo/>
 - www.painconcern.org.uk/
 - www.painassociation.com
 - Internet access is freely available at your local library.