

The Four 'P's of Pain Relief

A simple four step process for understanding and managing everyday pain.

1 
Pinpoint

You start to feel not quite right. Before you do anything, stop and pinpoint your pain. For example is it a headache or are you suffering from eye strain?

2 
Pause

Once you have identified your pain, pause and think 'how can I help myself?' For example by drinking more water (are you dehydrated?) or would a massage or a warm bath help?

3 
Pharmacist

If you feel that you need advice on pain relief speak to your pharmacist as certain pain killers might not suit you. If you are unsure what's right for you, always ask your pharmacist before you buy.

4 
Pain Relief

Paracetamol can be used as a first-choice pain reliever in most situations. It works differently to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin and ibuprofen. It doesn't interact with most other medicines and can be taken by people with most medical conditions. Paracetamol has fewer significant side effects than other common painkillers, is effective at tackling pain yet is gentle on the stomach. As with all medicines, people should always refer to the label for instructions.

PAIN FACT: Paracetamol is believed to work primarily on the brain, blocking the enzymes involved in the transmission of pain.

Ask About Pain Relief

Certain painkillers may not be suitable for you – so always consult your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure.

Ask About Pain Relief has been produced with advice from Ask About Medicines, an independent campaign to increase people's involvement in decisions about their medicines use. Please visit www.askaboutmedicines.org for more information.

For further information about managing pain and about Panadol products, visit www.mypainrelief.com

Panadol Advance 500mg Tablets are for the relief of mild-to-moderate pain and fever. Panadol Advance Tablets contain paracetamol. Always read the label.



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ASK ABOUT PAIN RELIEF



Tackling common pain problems and making the right choice for you

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Everyday pain

One in five of us experience pain most days or every day. Fortunately, much of the pain is at a level we can manage ourselves, sometimes with the help of medicines and advice from healthcare professionals. This leaflet is a guide to tackling everyday pain and helping you to make informed choices when deciding about pain relief.

What is pain?

The body uses pain to tell the brain that something is wrong. Never ignore pain.

Should I take a painkiller?

Many people regularly take painkillers to tackle their pain. But, there are also many small lifestyle changes you can make that could help ease your suffering. In the first instance you should always stop, think and consider the most suitable way for you to manage your pain. Here are some ways you can help yourself:

HEADACHE

The 'tension-type' headache is the most common form and can often be eased by relaxation, massage or applying a hot flannel to the forehead or neck.

PERIOD PAIN

Some women find that cramps can be eased by placing a hot water bottle on the stomach or by exercising.

BACKACHE

If possible, keeping mobile is important, with gentle stretches helping to ease the pain and keep the body supple. Some people may find their back pain can be eased by heat, such as a hot water bottle. Bed rest is no longer the standard treatment for backache and can sometimes make it worse.

PAIN FACT: Tension can make pain feel worse. Learning to relax and control your breathing can help ease tension and so ease pain.

Common Painkillers

Most over the counter painkillers are based on three active ingredients – paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin.

So what is the difference?

- Paracetamol helps tackle pain and reduce fever and is recommended as a first choice treatment for lower back pain, the pain of mild arthritis, sprains and strains and even sore throats. It works in a different way to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin and ibuprofen. It can be used by people with other medical problems, stomach or heart problems, or if they are taking some other kinds of medicines. Liquid syrup formulations are available for very young children, but these should be taken under the guidance of a doctor or pharmacist. You should only take one medicine at a time that contains paracetamol and not take more than the recommended dose.
- Ibuprofen: A non steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). It can be used to reduce pain and fever and can also relieve muscular aches and pains but should not be taken for longer than ten days without seeing a doctor. Liquid syrup formulations are available for young children. However, it should not be taken if you have, or have had, a peptic ulcer or upper G.I. bleed. Care should also be taken if you suffer from heart problems or if taking some other medications, so ask your pharmacist or doctor for advice.
- Aspirin can be used to relieve pain and fever and was the original non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). Its action can protect against heart disease when used in low doses and only on advice from a doctor. It should, however, not be taken by children under the age of 16 or by people with, or who have had, stomach ulcers or those who have had asthma attacks after taking aspirin.

These painkillers are all effective pain and fever relievers, but you should always ask your doctor or pharmacist and refer to the labels on packaging to ensure you are using the most suitable one for you.

Ask About Pain Relief... which is right for me?

Questions to ask about your painkillers

What does this medicine do?

Why is it important that I take this medicine? Are there any other treatment options?

When and how should I take it?

How long should I take it for?

What should I be aware of when taking this medicine?

(e.g. possible risks, side effects and reactions with other medications, taking medicine with certain foods/drinks/activities, what to do if I don't feel well while taking it, how to store it safely, etc)

Where can I go for more information?

Consult your pharmacist or doctor for more information about which is the most suitable pain relief for you.

	IBUPROFEN	ASPIRIN	PARACETAMOL
Children aged under 3 months	Always read the product label	✗	Always read the product label
Children aged 3 months - 6 months	Always read the product label	✗	✓*
Children aged 6 months - 16 years	✓*	✗	✓*
I am over 60 years old	✓	✓	✓
I have/have had a stomach ulcer	✗	✗	✓
I have had an asthma attack after taking aspirin/a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug	✗	✗	✓
I have heart problems	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	✓
I have kidney problems	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist
I have liver problems	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist
I am pregnant	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist
I am breast feeding	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist
I am taking other medicines	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist	Ask your doctor/pharmacist

* Liquid formulations only are available for very young children.