



## A Guide for Talking to Your Doctor About Chronic Pain

You've probably experienced what happens to many people during a visit to your doctor--you know the key reasons for your visit, you've thought through all of the questions you want to ask, and the minute the doctor says hello, it all disappears. This downloadable tool is intended to help you talk to your doctor about your chronic pain and help you work together to find the right pain management plan.

**1. What is the main reason for your visit? A first-time meeting to discuss a pain management plan or a repeat visit to track the status of your existing pain management plan?**

**2. How would you describe the symptoms of pain you're experiencing?**

- Is it sharp, throbbing, aching or burning? Is there numbness or tingling associated with the pain?
- Where is it located? Be as specific as possible by pointing to the specific area or region of your body.
- It may help to rate your pain on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is no pain and 10 is the worst pain you can imagine. Try tracking your pain for several days or weeks before visiting your doctor, if possible, to see how it changes over time.

**3. How often do you experience your pain (daily, several times per week, or weekly)?**

**4. What time of day is your pain the worst (in the morning or at bedtime)?**

**5. Does your pain interfere with your regular routine like sleeping, lifting common household objects, bending, walking or sitting?**

**6. Are you currently doing anything to help manage the pain you're feeling? Do you do yoga, get massages, acupuncture therapy, or take over-the-counter medicines? How often do you do these things?**

**7. Do you have any known allergies to medicines you've taken?**

### Getting the Answers You Need

It's important that your doctor has all of the right information to understand your pain and work with you to customize a pain management plan that is right for you. It is also important for you to be well informed about what to expect from a pain care plan. Here are the types of questions you may want to ask your doctor.

**1. What should I know before I begin the pain management plan?**

**2. What are the benefits of the plan you are recommending? What are the risks?**

**3. How often should I take my medicine?**

**4. Are there any specific instructions such as taking it with or without food, should I take it morning or night?**

**5. What other side effects could I experience with this medicine? What should I do if I experience a side effect?**

**6. How much will this medicine cost and will my insurance cover the medicine? Are there any support programs available to help supplement the cost?**