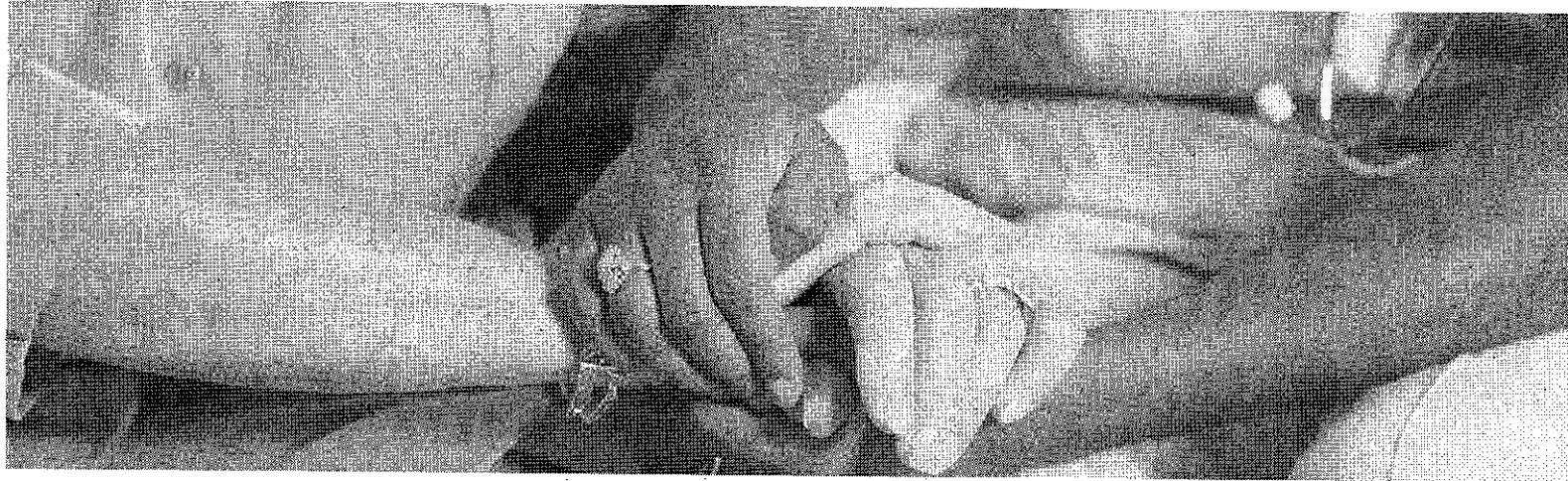




PAIN AWARENESS CAREGIVER CHALLENGE





ARE YOU IN THE KNOW ABOUT COMMON PAIN AND PAIN TREATMENT ISSUES FACING THE CLIENTS YOU SERVE?

For 20 years, opioids were the first (and sometimes the only) choice doctors offered to patients for pain relief. But, it turns out the risks associated with opioids far outweigh the benefits. Today, we find ourselves in the midst of an immense public health crisis as a result of overuse and misuse of opioids. With one less tool available to bring relief to those who experience pain, healthcare workers are now faced with the challenge of finding alternative ways to provide safe and effective pain management to clients who need it.

..... more than

100 million

Americans suffer from chronic pain.

The most common types of pain are back pain, headaches/migraines, and neck pain.

Serious pain costs

\$325 billion

in lost earnings every year.



DID YOU KNOW?

Opioid prescriptions in the United States have quadrupled since 2001.

Approximately 80% of the global opioid supply is consumed in the US.

NOW WE KNOW THE RISKS FAR OUTWEIGH THE BENEFITS

New guidelines call for doctors to reduce or end the use of opioids—with exceptions for cancer and end of life care.

#getintheknownow

..... approx.

700,000

Americans have died from accidental opioid overdose since 2001.



HALF A MILLION

seniors on Medicare Part D take more than the recommended dose of opioids each year—leading to 125,000 hospitalizations for breathing problems, confusion, drug interactions, and falls.

Are your caregivers prepared to handle the challenges that go along with caring for clients with acute and chronic pain?

Now you can find out with the Pain Awareness Caregiver Challenge!

Distribute it to your caregivers to measure their knowledge of pain and pain treatment options.

Give your caregivers the tools they need to help all the clients they serve!

HOW CAN YOU HELP CLIENTS IN PAIN?

Physical pain is usually unwelcome and uncomfortable. But, believe it or not, pain is also natural and necessary. It protects people from harm. For example:

- The pain from a sprained ankle keeps a person off his feet for a few days—giving the ankle a chance to heal.

Unfortunately, pain can also become **constant, unbearable, and devastating**. Instead of protecting people from harm, pain can destroy their ability to live normal lives. This is known as chronic pain.

- **Chronic pain** is any pain that lasts longer than three to six months.

Know the signs of physical pain.

Observe for and report all signs and symptoms of pain. Some words clients may use to describe pain include:

- Pounding
- Aching
- Sharp
- Shooting
- Deep
- Gnawing
- Stabbing
- Burning
- Electrical
- Prickling
- Dull
- Pinching
- Cramping
- It comes and goes.
- It's always there.
- It keeps me awake.
- This is unbearable.
- It gets worse when I move.
- It seems better in the morning.

If your client can't speak, watch for these non-verbal clues:

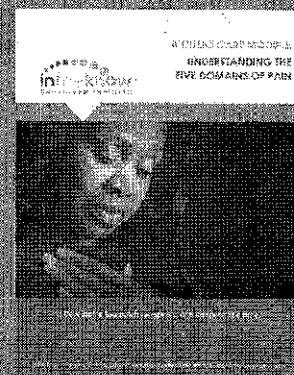
- Restlessness
- Wringing their hands
- Clenching teeth
- Rubbing or holding a body part
- Moaning
- Whimpering
- Crying
- Suddenly grumpy or irritable
- Higher blood pressure
- Rapid pulse
- Sweating
- Nausea

Observe for and report **ANY** side effects of pain medications. All pain medications have potential side effects. Report any observations you make to the nurse or your supervisor right away. If the side effects are serious, medications can be decreased, stopped, or changed.

Deliver some **nondrug treatments**. Learn a few safe, non-drug treatments for managing your client's pain. There are also some things you can do *without* a doctor's order, like play soothing music, teach your client deep breathing techniques for relaxation, or read to your client.

More about non-drug pain relief techniques on the next page!

The info on this page is from the course, The Five Domains of Pain.



2 LEARNING OPTIONS

PDF Newsletter-Style Format

This format is perfect for instructor-led, classroom training, or to distribute for independent learning.

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NON-DRUG PAIN MANAGEMENT

Non-drug treatment options for pain fall under these two categories:

PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

- Exercise
- Splinting/Orthotics
- Cold/heat
- Massage
- Vibration
- Positioning
- Whirlpool
- Liniments

MENTAL INTERVENTIONS

- Talking/Listening
- Relaxation
- Music
- Imagery
- Meditation/Prayer
- Deep breathing
- Distraction
- Humor

Activities that DO NOT require a doctor's order include:

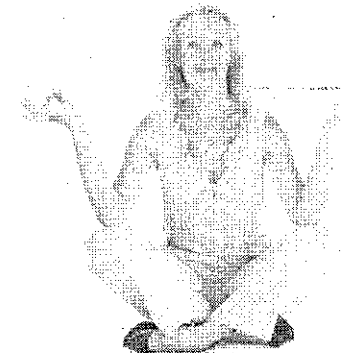
- **Distraction**—To distract a client from pain you may try to play a game, like cards; watch television or a movie; or get them to talk about the "old days."
- **Backrub/shoulder massage**—Offer a massage after a warm bath, before bed, or any time the need arises.
- **Music**—Music can be a distraction and can reduce tension and anxiety.
- **Positioning**—Immobile clients should be gently repositioned at least every two hours. Follow your workplace policy.
- **Reading**—If your client can read, be sure to provide books, magazines, and newspapers. If your client is unable to read because of poor vision or other problems, offer to read to him.
- **Prayer**—Research shows that prayer is the most common non-drug way of controlling pain.
- **Comfort foods**—Comfort food can make people feel physically and mentally better!

COMPLIMENTARY & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (CAM)

Complimentary medicine involves non-conventional practices that are usually used together with conventional medicine. For example, Mary, a 67-year-old woman with arthritis, uses yoga and meditation in addition to conventional medicine to relieve pain.

Here are some common CAM practices that may relieve pain:

- Yoga
- Tai-Chi
- Meditation
- Hypnosis
- Chiropractic
- Acupuncture
- Pet Therapy
- Music and Art Therapy



The info on this page is from the course, Understanding Pain Management.



2 LEARNING OPTIONS

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DRUG ABUSE AND DIVERSION AMONG HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Drug abuse and addiction to prescription medication is a widespread problem in the United States. And, people addicted to prescription medications come from all walks of life—including healthcare professionals.

A Few Terms:

- **Drug abuse** is defined as the habitual use of drugs to alter one's mood, emotion, or state of consciousness.
- **Drug diversion** is when a healthcare worker "diverts" medication that is supposed to go to the client. In other words, the healthcare worker says the client took the medication, and may even chart it, but then takes all or a part of the medication for his or her own personal use.

Healthcare workers often have easy access to highly addictive controlled substances like pain medications, anti-anxiety drugs, and sedatives.

Since federal regulations require medical facilities to store controlled drugs in locked cabinets, medications are often stolen directly from clients.

Additionally, there are no regulations for storing drugs in the home, and home care workers are generally unsupervised—creating an ideal situation for drug abusers.

Healthcare workers may steal and use prescription drugs to relieve stress, reduce anxiety, or improve work performance. Others may steal drugs to supply friends or family members or to sell them for a profit.

Drug abusers are usually pretty easy to spot. There are certain signs that most will have. For example, the person may volunteer to administer medications for others. Their clients may seem to request or even receive more pain medications—but report less effective pain relief.

- There may be frequent reports of lost or wasted medications.
- Drug abusers may request to work in an area of high pain medication administration or on a shift with minimal supervision.
- Physical signs of drug abuse include hand tremors, mood swings, excessive sweating, irritability, or restlessness.

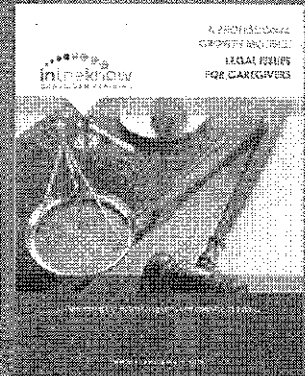
Drug use and abuse on the job impairs judgment and puts clients at risk of injury or even death.

AND, IN THE NEWS

A home care worker in Missouri was observed stealing hydrocodone tablets from her client's medications that were kept in a locked storage box. She was caught on a hidden camera in the home.

She was arrested and jailed—and faces up to 10 years in prison.

The info on this page is from the course, [Legal Issues for Caregivers](#).



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#GETINTHEKNOWNOW ABOUT PAIN

Name _____ Date: _____

Directions: Circle the best answer.

True or False *(Circle your answer)*

People who suffer from pain have a higher risk of developing depression.

Your client has an order for PRN pain medication. That means he takes it:

- A. Every 4 hours.
- B. As needed.
- C. At bedtime.
- D. Before meals.

True or False *(Circle your answer)*

Clients who deal with pain every day may lash out in frustration at their caregivers.

Your client tells you she suffers from frequent headaches as a side effect of her medications.

You should:

- A. Tell her to stop taking those medications.
- B. Help her stay hydrated, get enough sleep, and eat regular meals.
- C. Tell her that there is nothing she can do—and to just deal with it.
- D. Recommend she take a few of her husband's leftover narcotics for pain.

True or False *(Circle your answer)*

Petting an animal can reduce pain.

Which of the following pain treatments can a caregiver do for/with a client without a doctor's order? *(Check all that apply)*

- Provide distraction.
- Give a backrub/shoulder massage.
- Play client's favorite music.
- Gently reposition immobile clients.
- Pray with the client.
- Serve comfort foods.

When talking to a client who suffers from chronic pain, it may be harmful to say certain things. What could you say instead that would be helpful?

HARMFUL	HELPFUL
"You don't look sick!"	
"It's all in your mind."	
"You'll just have to tough it out and learn to live with the pain."	
"Cheer up!"	

PLEASE NOTE: This quiz is for informational purposes only and not valid for CE credit.

