



Strength
at Your Side

Pain Training Sheet

WHAT IS PAIN?

- Pain is hurting or discomfort that can cause physical, emotional or spiritual suffering.
- It's an experience that can only be felt and described by the person with the pain.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PAIN

- Pain should be reported to the Unity team by you, your family or caregivers.
- Some people describe pain as aching, burning, gnawing, grabbing, or being uncomfortable and sore.
- Children may sleep more, become irritable or have other behavior changes when in pain.
- Some individuals who can't speak for themselves may have behavior changes such as pacing, moaning, agitation, grimacing and furrowed brow.
- Strong pain medications (also known as narcotics or opioids) can help relieve pain; they may not take away pain completely, however they can help to keep the pain under control.

WHAT SHOULD YOU REPORT TO THE UNITY TEAM?

- Location of pain
- Severity or intensity of pain
- Does the pain keep you from doing your usual activities?
- What does the pain feel like? (burning, stabbing, sharp)
- What makes the pain worse?
- What makes the pain better?
- How often are you taking pain medication?
- If your pain is not managed after taking two doses of pain medication
- Any concerns about the medications or how to administer them
- Any side effects from pain medication
- What you have done in the past to help control the pain

WHAT CAN HELP RELIEVE PAIN?

There is much you, your caregiver, and the Unity team can do to manage pain. The Unity team will work with your doctor to find the cause of pain and discuss treatment options with you. Medications may be necessary to relieve

pain. The Unity nurse will give you information about the medicines, when to take them, potential side effects, and safe storage and disposal.

- It's important to take or administer the medicines as ordered.
- Report any side effects to the Unity nurse. Most side effects can be treated and some may stop after taking the medication for a few days
- In addition to medication, there are many other things you can do that may help with pain such as:
 - Relaxing activities (Examples- music, light massage, soaking in a tub, meditation, imagery)
 - Distracting activities (Examples- watching TV, playing with a pet or a game)
 - Cold or warm compresses
 - Deep breathing or meditation
 - Repositioning or propping arms and/or legs on pillows
 - Smells of certain essential plant oils (aromatherapy)

PAIN MEDICATION SIDE EFFECTS

It's important to realize all medications have some side effects and most side effects can be easily managed. Also, not everyone will have side effects from their medications. Some of the most common side effects of pain medicines are described below:

- **Constipation** – When bowel movements occur less often than your usual established bowel pattern or when you have difficulty moving your bowels.
- **Nausea and vomiting** – This may be associated with starting a new medication. It may only last for a day or two while the body adjusts to the new medication.
- **Sleepiness** – Some people who take pain medicines may feel more drowsy or sleepy when they first take the medicine.
- **Dizziness** – Some people may feel lightheaded or dizzy when they first take the medication. Stand up slowly.

Contact Unity anytime you have questions or concerns about pain.

Call Unity 24/7 at **920.338.1111** or **800.990.9249**

If there is no answer and the phone continues to ring, call **920-490-7418**.