

Controlling Your Pain Without Medicine

The following information is based on the general experiences of many prostate cancer patients. Your experience may be different. If you have any questions about what prostate cancer treatment services are covered by the IMPACT Program, please call your nurse case manager at 1-800-409-8252.

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What Will I Learn By Reading This Booklet?

This booklet will help you learn about ways to control your prostate cancer pain without medicine. Controlling the pain you have because of your prostate cancer is important. When you control your pain, you will be able to do the things that you want to do like working, spending time with family and friends, going to church, or shopping for groceries. In this booklet you will learn about:

- Ways of managing pain that do not use medicine
- Using non-medicine ways of pain control along with your prostate cancer pain medicine.

It is important for you to think about how you will manage your pain. The goal of managing your pain is to control your pain so that you can do the things you want and need to do. You also may find the information in the IMPACT booklet, “Controlling Your Pain with Medicine,” helpful in managing your pain.

Words that appear in **bold** (dark text) can be found in the “Key Words” section at the end of this booklet.

How Can I Manage My Prostate Cancer Pain Without Medicine?

There are things you can do to help manage your cancer pain without using medicine. There are many things you can do alone or along with your pain medicine. Some men with prostate cancer find that they don’t need as much pain

medicine if they use one or more of these methods. These non-medicine methods include:

- Relaxation
- Imagery
- Distraction
- Cold or Heat
- Emotional support and counseling
- Alternative medicine

If you would like to try one of these methods speak with your doctor or nurse case manager. They may be able to help you find which method might work best for you.

What Is Relaxation?

Relaxation is a way to lower your stress and anxiety. Relaxation helps relieve or control the amount of pain you are feeling. Relaxation helps relieve your pain or keeps it from getting worse by helping you get rid of the tightness in your muscles. Relaxation can help you fall asleep, give you more energy, make you feel less tired, lower your anxiety, and help other pain relief methods work better. For example, some men find that taking pain medication works faster and better if they relax at the same time they take the medicine.

How Do I Use Relaxation To Relieve My Pain?

Relaxation may be done sitting up or lying down. Pick a quiet place whenever possible. Make sure you are comfortable.

1. Close your eyes.
2. Breathe in deeply and slowly through your nose. Breath out slowly through your mouth. Focus on your breathing for a few minutes.
3. As you breath in, tense your muscles or a group of muscles. For example, you can squeeze your eyes shut, frown, clench your teeth, make a fist, stiffen your arms and legs, or draw up your arms and legs as tightly as you can.
4. Hold you breath and keep your muscles tense for a second or two.
5. Let go! Breath out and let the group of muscles that were tense go limp or relax.
6. Repeat steps 2 through 4 until you have tightened and released all your muscles.
7. Remember to keep breathing deeply as you tighten and release your muscles.

Your Relaxation

- How long did relaxation help relieve your pain?

- What problems did you have when you used relaxation?

Things You Should Know Before Using Relaxation To Relieve Your Pain

Some men who use relaxation to help relieve their pain have had a few problems. Here are some things they suggested to make your use of relaxation to relieve your pain better:



- Relaxation may be difficult to use if you have severe pain.
- Do not cross your arms and legs. This may cut off your blood circulation and cause your arm or leg to fall asleep.
- If you lie down, put a small pillow under your neck and under your knees to support your legs. This will make you more comfortable.
- Sometimes breathing too deeply for a while can cause you to have shortness of breath. If this happens to you, take shallow breaths or breath more slowly.
- You may fall asleep. This can be very helpful if you are ready to go to bed. If you do not wish to fall asleep, sit in a hard chair while doing the relaxation exercise or set a timer or alarm clock to wake you.

If you have trouble using this relaxation method, talk to your doctor or nurse case manager. Do not use relaxation if it makes your pain worse, makes you feel uneasy, or has bad results.

What Is Imagery?

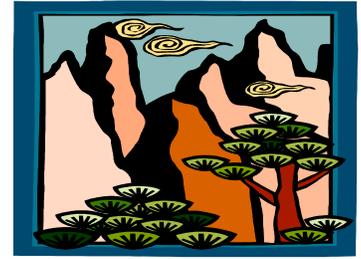
Imagery is when you use your imagination to make pictures or situations in your mind. Imagery is like daydreaming on purpose. It uses all of your senses – sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste.

Some images you make may lower your pain right away and for hours after you finish using this method. If you must stay in bed or can't leave your house, you may find that imagery helps lessen the feeling of being closed-in. Imagery can help you relax, help get rid of boredom, lower your anxiety, and help you sleep.

How Do I Use Imagery To Relieve My Pain?

Imagery usually works best with your eyes closed. You can make any image that you want such as a ball of healing energy or a picture of yourself as a person without pain. Or you can think of a nice, safe, relaxing place or activity that makes you happy. Exploring this place or activity in your mind can help you feel calm.

1. Lie down or sit so you are comfortable.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose. Breathe out slowly through your mouth. Feel yourself begin to relax.
4. Focus on your breathing. Breathe in this slow rhythm for a few minutes.
5. When you feel relaxed, picture a favorite scene in your mind. It could be a beach, the mountains or a happy moment with friends or family. Try to go into this scene each time you use imagery. If you can, make a special, safe place where nothing can hurt you and you feel safe. Feel what the air feels like there. Smell the smells. Hear the sounds.
6. Once you feel comfortable in your favorite scene, slowly think about your pain. Let the image become more clear and in focus. Don't worry if it seems to fade in and out.



7. If several images come to mind, choose one and stay with it.
8. If no images come to mind, try focusing on different feelings. For example, imagine hearing fish frying in a skillet or smelling wildflowers in a field. If this doesn't work, think about how you feel at the moment. Are you angry? Frustrated? What color is your anger? What image does your anger bring up in your mind? Use your feelings to make images.
9. Try to do this for 10-15 minutes at a time. At the end of each imagery session, imagine that your pain is completely gone.
10. Take a few more deep breaths. Open your eyes, stretch, smile and go on with your day. You may feel a bit better.

Your Imagery

- What image did you make?

- How long did imagery help relieve your pain?

- What problems did you have when you used imagery?

Things You Should Know Before Using Imagery To Relieve Your Pain

Some men who use imagery for pain relief have had some problems. These problems are similar to the ones men had when using relaxation methods. Here are some things they suggested to help make the use of imagery to relieve your pain better:

- Sometimes breathing too deeply for a while can cause you to have shortness of breath. If this happens to you, take shallow breaths or breath more slowly.
- You may fall asleep. This can be very helpful if you are ready to go to bed. If you do not wish to fall asleep, sit in a hard chair while doing the relaxation exercise or set a timer or alarm clock to wake you up.

If you have trouble using this relaxation method, talk to your doctor or nurse case manager. Remember, do not continue any method that makes your pain worse, makes you feel uneasy, or has bad results.

What Is Distraction?

Distraction means turning your attention to something other than your pain. You may already be using this method without knowing it. Many men with prostate cancer pain watch TV, listen to the radio, or play cards to help take their minds off their worry or pain. Distraction may be used alone to manage mild pain or with medicine to manage short times of severe pain. Distraction may help you when you are waiting for your pain medicine to start working. If your pain is mild, you may be able to distract yourself for hours.

How Do I Use Distraction To Relieve My Pain?

Any activity that takes up your attention can be used for distraction.



Distractions can be internal, for example, counting or praying. Or distractions can be external, such as doing crafts like model building or painting. Reading a good book might help keep your mind off your pain.



Going to a movie, watching TV or listening to music are also good distraction methods. Visiting with friends or family is another useful distraction method.



You may find it helpful to listen to music through a headset or earphones. To help keep your attention on the music, tap out the rhythm. You can make the music louder or quieter to match how your pain feels. Make the music louder for very severe pain. This method does not take much energy, so it may be very useful when you are tired.

Your Distraction

- What distraction methods do you use?

- How long did distraction help relieve your pain?

- What problems did you have when you used distraction?

Things You Should Know Before You Use Distraction To Relieve Your Pain

Some men who use distraction for pain relief have had some problems. After using a distraction technique, some men say that they are tired, irritable, and feel more pain. If this is a problem for you, you may not want to use distraction to help relieve your pain. Try out different types of distraction to see which one works best for you. If you have trouble using this relaxation method, talk to your doctor or nurse case manager. Do not continue any method that makes your pain worse, makes you feel uneasy, or has bad results.

Cold or Heat

As with any of the methods talked about in this booklet, you should use what works best for you. Cold and heat can be used alone or together. Heat can make sore muscles feel better. Cold can lower your feeling of pain by numbing the painful area. Some men with pain that lasts for a long time use only heat and have never tried cold. Other men find that cold relieves pain faster, and pain relief may last longer. You can switch between heat and cold for added pain relief in some cases.



How Can I Use Cold To Relieve My Pain?

Cold can be applied to your body in many ways. Try using gel packs that are sealed in plastic and remain soft and movable even when they are frozen. Gel packs can be found at your local drugstore and medical supply store. They can be used again and stored in your freezer. If you don't have a gel pack, try using an ice pack, ice cubes wrapped in a towel, water frozen in a paper cup or a bag of frozen peas. You may want to wrap whatever you are using in a towel to make it more comfortable.

1. Wrap the cold item in a dishtowel.
2. Place the cold pack on the area of your body where you have pain.
3. Keep the cold pack on for 10-15 minutes.
4. Take the cold pack off for 15 minutes.
5. Use the cold pack as needed to help make your pain better.



How Can I Use Heat To Relieve My Pain?

Heat can be applied to your body in many ways. You can use gel packs heated in hot water, hot water bottles, a hot, moist towel, a heating pad, or take a hot bath or shower.

1. Place a towel around your heat source, such as a hot water bottle.
2. Place the heat source on the area of your body where you have pain.
3. Keep the heat source on this area for 10-15 minutes.
4. Take the heat source off for 15 minutes.
5. Use heat as needed to help make your pain better.

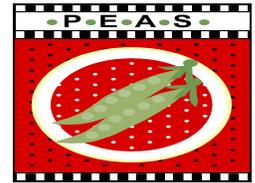


Things You Should Know Before Using Cold or Heat to Relieve

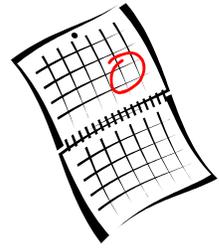
Your Pain

There are several things you should know before you use heat or cold to help relieve your pain:

- If you start to shiver when using cold, stop right away. Do not use cold so strong or for so long that the cold itself causes more pain.
- If you use a bag of frozen peas, throw them away after you are finished using them. Do not eat them. Once the peas have been defrosted and frozen several times, they no longer taste good.
- Do not use a heating pad on bare skin. Do not go to sleep for the night with the heating pad turned on.
- Be very careful, when using cold or heat, if you are taking medicines that make you sleepy or if you do not have much feeling in the area. Don't fall asleep with a heat or cold pack on your body.
- Do not use heat over a new injury because heat can increase bleeding. Wait at least 24 hours before using heat.



- Stay away from heat or cold if you are getting radiation therapy. Wait 6 months after therapy has ended before using heat or cold to relieve your pain.



- If you are getting chemotherapy, check with your doctor before using a cold pack.
- Do not use heat or cold over any area where your blood circulation or feeling is poor.
- Do not use heat or cold application for more than 10 to 15 minutes at a time.

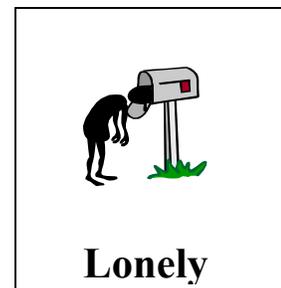
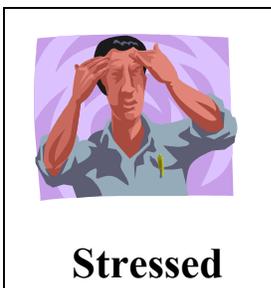
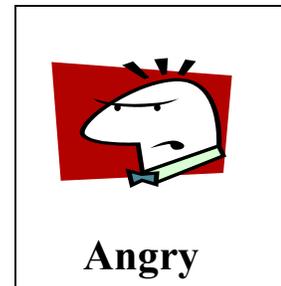
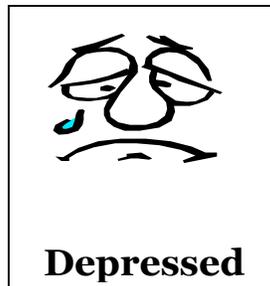
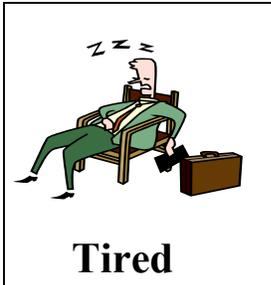


If you have questions or concerns about how to use heat or cold to relieve your pain, speak with your doctor or nurse case manager.

Emotional Support and Counseling

When you feel anxious or depressed, your pain may seem worse. Pain is sometimes compared to a big black hole where you can lose yourself and have negative feelings like being scared, alone, and sad. Pain can cause you to feel worried, depressed, or easily discouraged. Some men feel hopeless or helpless. Other men may feel embarrassed, inadequate, or angry, frightened, isolated, or frantic. These are normal feelings. There are things you can do to make yourself feel better. If you experience these feelings, ask for help. Your doctor or nurse case manager should attend to your pain and these feelings.

When pain is not treated as it should be, you may be:



Finding Support

It is important for you to try to talk about your feelings with someone you feel comfortable with – doctors, nurse case manager, family or friends, a member of the clergy, or other men with prostate cancer. You may also wish to talk to a counselor. Your doctor or nurse case manager may be able to help you find a counselor who is trained to help men with cancer.



You may also want to join a support group with other men who have prostate cancer. Free support groups for cancer patients and their families are available throughout the state of California. Support groups can help you improve the quality of your life as well as help you cope with your cancer.

Support groups come in many different forms. Some cancer support groups are like classes with a leader who gives information to you and others ask you to share your thoughts and feelings. Some programs also allow you to speak one-on-one with a cancer survivor. It doesn't matter which type of group you choose to attend, they are all an important source of support.

If you would like more information or would like to join a support group speak with your doctor or nurse case manager. Your nurse case manager can be reached at 1-800-409-8252.

Alternative Medicines

Many men with prostate cancer have turned to alternative medicine or non-prescription medicine as a means of controlling their pain. If you use a traditional healer and take herbal or **homeopathic** (natural matter used in small amounts to make you health) remedies, it is important to talk to your doctor about this. Some herbs and homeopathic medicines can make you feel worse when used with pain medicines given to you by your doctor. You want to make sure that these treatments will not work against the treatment you and your doctor have planned for your prostate cancer.

Things You Should Remember About Managing Your Pain Without Medicine

Here are some things to think about before you try relieving your pain without medicine:

- Learn which methods work for you. Try using a non-medicine method along with your medicine. For example, you might use relaxation to lessen lower your stress level at the same time you take your medicine.
- Know yourself and what you can do. The key is not to do too much and cause more pain. When you are rested, you can try a method that takes more of your attention and energy. If you are tired, use a method that is not as hard for you to do. For example, try distraction when you are rested. Use hot or cold packs when you are tired.
- Be open-minded and keep trying. Keep a record of what makes you feel better and what doesn't help you.
- Try each method more than once. If it doesn't work the first time, try it a few more times before you decide it is not helping you.
- Pain is an important sign that something is wrong in your body. Remember to report any new pain problems to your doctor or nurse case manager. Don't try and treat your pain on your own. Your doctor and nurse case manager are here to help you.

- Remember, pain can be controlled when you and your doctor work together as a team and you are the important part of that team.

Your Pain Control Team	
Doctor's Name	
Doctor's office phone number	
Phone number where you can reach your doctor in the evening or on weekends.	
Nurse Case Manager's Name	
Nurse Case Manager's phone number	1-800-409-8252

Record of Non-Medicine Methods Used For Pain Relief

You can use a chart like this to rate your pain and to keep a record of how well your non-medicine method is working. Write the information in the chart. Use the pain intensity scale to rate your pain before and after you take use the relaxation method.

Pain Intensity Scale										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Pain									Worst Pain You Can Think Of	
Date	Time	Pain Scale Rating	Non-Medicine Method	Other Pain Relief Methods Used						
June 6 (example)	8 am	4	Distraction	None						

What Have I Learned?

In this booklet, you learned about different ways to relieve your pain without medicine. You learned:

- How to manage your pain without medicine
- Ways to manage your pain without medicine.

If you have any questions, please talk to your doctor or nurse case manager. It is important that you know how to manage your pain. This knowledge will help you take better care of yourself and feel more in control so that you are not kept from doing the things that you want to do. Remember you want to control your pain so that it does not control you.

Key Words

Distraction: turning your attention to something other than your pain.

Homeopathic: The belief that natural substances, prepared in a special way and used most often in very small amounts, can make you healthy.

Imagery: A relaxation method in which the person focuses on positive images in his mind.

Relaxation: a way to lower your stress and anxiety which helps relieve pain.