

HOW TO DEAL WITH CHRONIC PAIN

The older person is at higher risk of chronic pain from many degenerative conditions, such as those involving the joints and lower back.

Pain can have an impact on a person's physical function (activities of daily living) as well as psychosocial function (social interaction, meaningful communication) and therefore should be taken seriously.

- Ask your doctor about possible side-effects of medications given for pain.
- Ask about other treatment options apart from the use of drugs. Physical therapy and appropriate use of assistive devices such as a walking stick can alleviate knee pain from osteoarthritis.
- For some painful conditions – such as arthritis or the knee or some types of back pain – acupuncture can also be helpful in addition to western medical management and treatments (See “How to Effectively Use Traditional Chinese Medicine” on page 35).
- Look out for depression if you have chronic pain.