



Children's National™

Chaplaincy Services

A young girl with dark hair, wearing an orange ribbed tank top with a white floral design, is shown from the chest up. She has a white medical bandage wrapped around her right forearm. Her mouth is wide open in a cry, and her hands are clasped together in front of her. The background is a soft-focus white fabric. The word "PAIN" is overlaid in large white capital letters on the right side of the image.

PAIN



“Ouch” is a very good word. Sometimes when something hurts we need to say it quietly through clenched teeth – sometimes it needs to be said really loud – and long – accompanied by tears.

Nobody likes to hurt. When we do, the hurt sometimes seems bigger, more real, than we are. Sometimes it feels like we’re going to get completely lost and trapped inside the pain.

Many sorts of pain can be made better by medicine, but some can never go all the way away. Sometimes the medicine which makes the pain less, makes us sleepy and tired. So before, when the pain was really bad, we couldn’t do something we wanted to do – but now the medicines which take the pain away make us too tired to do some of those things, too.

The problem of pain is a pretty tricky one.

Sometimes we will hear someone say that pain is bad. But is it all bad? Pain tells us something needs attention. Pain is a part of living – for everyone – sometime or other. There may be some times when we have some choices about how much pain is too



much, how much is okay, how much medicine is too much because it makes us sleep all the time, and how much is just right so even if we hurt some – we can also do some things we really want to do.

These are important things to think about and talk about with your family. A teenager might want to have pain medicine in the morning and really sleep – but not so much in the afternoon so he can visit with friends. A younger child might be able to manage a little more discomfort if they get a trip to the playground.

Moms and Dads and Grandparents don't like to see their children in pain and sometimes want doctors to give medicines that will stop as much pain as possible.

Sometimes that's a very good decision. Sometimes not. Everyone, even children, need to enjoy the things that give pleasure. If not, we can get really sad, lonely, feel less human, and less connected to the world. Having a little pain might be a good deal to remember that we are more, much more, than our pain.

Think about it, talk about it – in your family, with your doctors and nurses, your chaplain or family clergy person.

Pain is no fun. No one should have to endure it “just because.” Everyone has the right to do the things that are important to them and to be the most complete person they can be without pain taking those things away. But some pain, in some form, can be a part of all the things we do are. It might not have to be stronger than we are all the time.

God, You are so amazing. You have given us bodies that live, hearts that

beat, lungs that breathe, nerves carry messages around faster than email! And when something in our bodies is hurt or sick these nerves tell us by giving us pain. Pain is important, it can help doctors find out what is happening and how to help us feel better. But we still don't like pain. It hurts and we want to cry. We want to cry and be brave all at the same time. Sometimes when we hurt we know we could hurt so much more.

When my child hurts it's almost too much to bear. God, could You help us manage the pain so we can play, talk, be with people we love. We are grateful for the medicines that keep the hardest pain away. So God, thank You for pain – and I'm mad at You, too, because pain is a part of our lives.

Help us through each pain with Your strength and healing love.

# Other Ways To “Manage” Pain



**Acupuncture** works very well for some pain

**Healing touch and Reiki** are ancient and modern adaptations of using gentle touch or near-touch to “balance” the body’s energy, to calm, and to reduce pain.

**Breathing-out.** Think about a spot in your body that hurts. Imagine it as a hard, round shape – then breathe/blow right through the shape – blow the pain away; let the spot become relaxed.



**Guided imagery** verbal, with or without music

**Aromatherapy** Good smells like lavender or sage or basil or lemon can be relaxing and calming when they are light, not too strong.



**For more information, contact your chaplains  
Children's National Medical Center**

**Washington, DC**

**202-476-3321**

**[www.childrensnational.org](http://www.childrensnational.org)**

**Follow Us on Facebook**

**[bit.ly/2e10t3K](https://bit.ly/2e10t3K)**



**Children's National™**