



Physiotherapists:  
The Body Specialists

# Physio Tips

**PAIN**

Physiotherapy Association of BC

## MANAGING PAIN

### Learning How To Decrease Pain AND Improve Your Function

1. Ask your physiotherapist to provide you with education about pain science and pain management
2. Practice relaxation, breathing exercises and body awareness exercises every day. Work with your physiotherapist to bring these techniques into your exercises and daily activities.
3. Understand that pain does not have to limit you from participating in your usual daily activities – relaxation, breath control and letting go of muscle tension may provide less need to modify activities with the guidance of your physiotherapist.
4. Pace yourself. Work with your physiotherapist to learn how to set goals for work, hobbies and social activities that will not flare up your pain, and that will allow you to recover.
5. Do your best to be patient and persistent. Recovery from chronic pain requires ongoing practice.
6. Do the things that bring you joy, on purpose, even if they are difficult. Your nervous system has powerful “anti-pain” mechanisms that only turn on when you smile, laugh, have fun and do things that are personally meaningful.
7. Work with your physiotherapist to find an exercise program that is right for you. Exercise produces the biological changes that promote allow your body to recover.

Exercise daily for short periods at a pace that is comfortable for you. Make small increases frequently.

7. Talk to you physician about developing a plan and setting goals to taper off your pain medication - if the pills do not allow you to move better and have less pain.
8. Encourage your family and friends to support healthy behaviours related to recovery (gradually resuming your usual activities of daily living, eating properly, getting enough sleep, exercising at a safe level).
9. Be open with your physiotherapist. Ask questions related to improving your function.
10. Remain confident that you will attain your goals of less pain, greater mobility and improved quality of life, over time.

Physiotherapists are experts in education, movement and mobility, body mechanics, muscles and joints. They will help you understand pain, and then develop an exercise program specially tailored to your needs, putting together the right combination of activities to manage your pain while improving your physical fitness and avoiding injury.

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