



Power Over Pain

MYTHS ABOUT PAIN

You are the only one who knows how much pain you are in. Talk to your health care provider about your pain. Remember - your pain is what you say it is! The following are some common myths people have about pain medicine and the facts about them:

MYTH: I will become "addicted" to my pain medication..

FACT: Addiction is very rare when people are taking their pain medications appropriately for pain relief.

MYTH: If I take too much pain medication, it will stop working.

FACT: Your medication will not stop working. Sometimes your body will get used to the medication. This is called "tolerance". At this time, your health care provider will need to increase the amount of medication you are taking to relieve your pain. This does not occur because you are becoming hooked on the medication.

MYTH: I should take my medication only when I have severe pain.

FACT: Do not wait until your pain is severe to take your medication. Pain is much easier to control when it is mild than when it is severe.

MYTH: If I complain about my pain, I am not being a good patient.

FACT: Controlling your pain is an important part of your care. Tell your health care provider if you have pain, if your pain is getting worse, or if you are taking pain medication and it is not working. Tell them if you are having side effects from the pain medication. Your health care provider can help you get relief from your pain and control the side effects.

Taken from Managing Cancer Pain, AHCPR, 1994

New Mexico Pain Initiative 3200 Carlisle Blvd. NE. Suite 117, Albuquerque, NM 87110