

Self management of pain

1) Change the load, manage the pain

- Find a different way to achieve your goal.
- Use equipment to reduce the load on a body part.
- Change your posture.

2) Danger vs safety

- Pain arises when your brain thinks you are in danger. This is why a paper cut can sometimes hurt more than a fracture.
- If you can feel safe and relaxed, you may feel less pain.

3) Try not to feel unhelpful thoughts

- Catastrophising: “It will keep hurting more.”
- Self-criticism: “I’m being weak and pathetic.”
- Making excessive demands on yourself using ‘Should’ and ‘must’ statements: “I must not give in to this pain.”

4) Prioritising, pacing, planning

- If an activity brings on pain, there may be only so much you can tolerate.
- Make sure you're using that activity for meaningful or enjoyable things.
- Pace yourself.
- Plan your activity to reduce pain.

5) Relaxation can reduce pain

- Relax into it with acceptance - don't try to chase it away.
- Try mental relaxation tapes, mindful meditation, warm baths, massage, relaxing music or equipment that helps you to be in a relaxing position.

6) Mental distraction

- Focus on external events and not the pain
- Verbal distractions such as TV, radio, audiobooks and talking.
- Pay attention to anything concerning your pain, but don't fixate on it.

For assistance, please call the hospice therapy team via
OneCall on 0800 5670 111