

- **Local Anaesthetics**

These block the ability of nerves to carry pain signals from the operation site to the brain so the pain is reduced.

They are given by injection in a number of different ways; a common method is by epidural injection.

Simple Techniques

- **Relaxation Techniques**

Many people find that relaxation techniques before and after surgery are really helpful in controlling pain, anxiety and the need for medication.

- **Slow Rhythmic Breathing**

Breathing exercises may help you relax, if you intend to do this for more than a few seconds, try to get into a comfortable position in a quiet environment, close your eyes or focus on an object like a picture on the wall.

- **Diversional Therapy – Imagery**

Imagine that you are in a place you have found very calming and relaxing, such as lying in the sun at the beach and try to focus on this for a short time.

- **Hot and Cold Packs**

These may also help to alleviate some of your pain and are available on the wards.

When you get home, continue to take your Paracetamol regularly for 2-3 days. Treat your pain **before** it gets too bad. ***If pain persists see a doctor.***

We hope your stay was not too “painful” an experience, please tell us if it was.

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PATIENT INFORMATION

WHANGAREI HOSPITAL

Pain Service

Will I have pain?

**The Pain Service
helping you**

UNDERSTANDING PAIN

- **WHAT IS PAIN?**

Pain is a natural process that tells you of an injury. Sometimes the injury is necessary as with an operation or procedure. Pain can be anticipated and reduced. Effective pain relief is an important part of your treatment. As the healing process begins pain should fade naturally and medications can be gradually reduced.

- **Everyone is different**

Following the same operation or procedure, patients experience varying levels of pain.

- **Why is that?**

Everyone has had different experiences in the past, which may affect our reaction to pain. Personality and attitude have an effect on how we perceive pain.

- **Reporting how you feel**

Pain cannot be objectively assessed. Caregivers cannot feel exactly what you are feeling.

There are scales used for measuring pain, which the nursing staff may use. With the verbal pain score you score your pain level between 0-10 (0 being no pain and 10 being the worst pain you've ever experienced). Your pain score will be charted, just as we chart your blood pressure and pulse.

The Pain Service - Helping you

Modern methods on pain relief

- **What is available?**

Effective pain relief is known to have many benefits. It enables you to sleep, eat and drink more easily and helps you to get up and about. These factors can help to prevent complications and to get you home as soon as possible.

In the past decade, there has been an increase in techniques and drugs that provide effective pain relief.

Other ways to reduce your pain

- **Paracetamol**

This is a widely used simple pain relief with few side effects. After an operation if used in combination with Opioids, it can reduce the amount of stronger pain killers you need by up to 26% - if taken regularly.

- **NSAID – non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs**

These help reduce inflammation, They are often used in combination with other drugs. They can cause abdominal discomfort in some people, so please let medical staff know if you have had stomach problems or ulcers in the past, suffer from asthma or kidney problems, or take drugs to thin your blood.

- **Opioids**

These are powerful painkillers. These drugs act on the brain to reduce the pain and can be used immediately after surgery or a procedure. They may be given by mouth, by a special pump into a vein or into the spine as an epidural. Opioids can cause drowsiness and nausea.