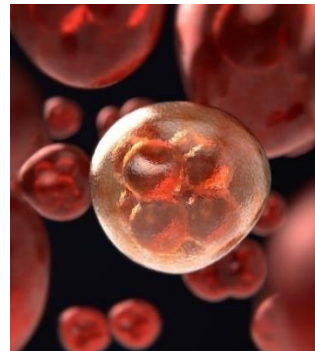


## FAST FACTS: Cancer Pain



Although not all patients with cancer experience pain, it is a significant problem. Approximately 75% of cancer pain is related to the tumor itself and 25% is related to cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation. Because cancer pain is often severe it is generally treated with opioids and other prescription medications. Pain medications are prescribed based on the intensity and quality (feeling) of the pain.

### ✓ Cancer Pain

- Impacts muscle, bone, and/or organs
- Cancer may cause swelling of soft tissue, bowel obstruction, or metastases (spreading of cancer from the original tumor site into other tissues or bones)
- Bone or muscle pain is often described as achy and dull. This type of pain is very localized and the area causing discomfort should be easy to identify.
- Organ or intestinal pain is often described as cramping, pressure, or a deep ache. This pain commonly causes discomfort in other areas of the body (often seen as back pain).

### ✓ Common Treatment

- Common opioid medications for moderate pain (4-6 on a 10-point scale)
  - Acetaminophen with codeine
  - Acetaminophen with hydrocodone
  - Acetaminophen with oxycodone
- Common opioid medications for severe pain (7-10 on 10-point scale)
  - Morphine sulfate
  - Oxycodone
  - Hydromorphone



### ✓ What Else You Should Do

- Write down and share information about your loved one's pain with their healthcare provider
- Use a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information useful to the healthcare provider
- Encourage your loved one to try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on their pain in their Pain Diary

#### References:

1. American Cancer Society. January 3, 2019. *Facts about Cancer Pain*. Accessed 3.13.2022. <https://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/physical-side-effects/pain/facts-about-cancer-pain.html>
2. Mayo Clinic. February 12, 2021. *Cancer pain: Relief is possible*. Accessed 3.13.2022. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cancer/in-depth/cancer-pain/art-20045118>