

Common Pain Misconceptions	Pain Truths*
Patients who take pain medicine become addicted.	In most cases, the risk of addiction is small and careful monitoring of drug treatment by a doctor makes it very unlikely.
When you use pain medicine your body becomes used to its effects and pretty soon it won't work anymore.	Tolerance to pain relief medications is not an inevitable consequence of ongoing pain management. Most pain subsides when taking an appropriate level of medication. If more or different medication is needed, it is usually because the painful problem has worsened.
If you talk about pain, people will think you're a complainer.	Assessing and communicating pain conditions is key to effective pain management. Tools and scales exist to help others understand the level of pain being experienced.
Pain can't be real if the cause can't be found.	The person who has the pain, knows his/her pain best. Pain is whatever the person says it is, occurring whenever the person says it occurs.
Talking about pain will distract your doctor from working for a cure or remission.	Treating pain does not compromise finding a treatment for a disease. Once pain is treated, the body doesn't have to concentrate on battling it. The person who has the pain is an important member of the healthcare team. Pain relief is most effective when the person with pain works closely with the doctor or nurse.
It's easier to put up with pain than the side effects that come with pain medicines.	Medications that are carefully adjusted can minimize side effects and increase the quality of life for patients.
Pain medicine will make you feel "out of it."	It is far easier to prevent pain than deal with it after it occurs.
If your pain is relieved, you won't know what's going on with your illness or body.	Pain should be treated immediately and effectively. Pain weakens a person and weakens the immune system. There is some evidence that treating pain relieves stress on the body, so the body heals faster.

*This is not intended to provide a complete representation of pain truths. Visit www.norcalpain.org for additional resources.