

OPIOID ALTERNATIVES

FOR MODERATE PAIN

- PHYSICAL THERAPY
- ACUPUNCTURE
- SURGERY
- INJECTIONS
- MEDICAL CANNABIS

FOR CHRONIC PAIN

- RADIO WAVES
- NERVE BLOCKS
- ELECTRICAL SIGNALS
- SPINAL CORD
STIMULATION
- PAIN PUMPS

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**OPIOID
ALTERNATIVES**

THERE IS
**ANOTHER
WAY**
TACKLING OUR OPIOID CRISIS

OPIOID ALTERNATIVES

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE OPIOIDS TO GET RID OF PAIN.

Here Are Some Other Ideas

Some other pain meds work just as well and don't make you feel as bad as opioids. Seriously!

You can try higher doses, or more frequent doses, or rotating doses of meds like:

- Ibuprofen (Advil)
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Aspirin (Bayer or Excedrin)

You can get these meds at a pharmacy or by prescription.

ALWAYS check with your medical provider or the pharmacist to find out how to take these non-opioid pain meds to treat your pain.

Other people find help without the use of drugs or by using treatments with medicines that can be found in stores. **If you or someone you know is in pain, you can try or suggest these:**

Physical Therapy

A physical therapist or doctor who specializes in physical medicine and rehab may be able to create an exercise program that helps to improve the ability to function and helps ease pain. Whirlpools, ultrasound and deep-muscle massages may also help.

Acupuncture

You may find that acupuncture helps reduce pain. This involves very thin needles that are inserted at different places in your skin to interrupt pain signals.

Surgery

When other treatments don't work, surgery can sometimes be performed to correct problems in your body that may cause pain.

Injections or Nerve Blocks

If you are having a muscle spasm or nerve pain, injections with painkillers directly to the place of pain, can help.

Medical Cannabis or Medical Marijuana

Medical cannabis can be prescribed by doctors for their patients in New Mexico. The use of cannabis as medicine has not been completely tested due to government rules. Some tests show that cannabis can reduce sickness and vomiting during chemotherapy, improve appetite for some medical problems, and reduce chronic pain and muscle spasms.

AND THEN THERE'S SOME HIGH-TECH OPTIONS FOR TREATING CHRONIC PAIN.

Some patients with chronic pain will not find relief with non-opioid medications or treatments like physical therapy.

You can always ask your doctor about some of these latest high-tech methods for easing chronic pain:

Radio Waves

This involves putting a needle next to the nerve responsible for the pain and burning the nerve using an electricity created by radio waves. This short-circuits the pain signal. Pain relief can last for up to one year.

Nerve Blocks

Using X-ray imaging, medical providers can inject numbing medication that blocks or reduces pain and might even stop long-lasting pain from developing. The location of the injection depends on the source and type of pain. For example, pain in the arm or face can be relieved by blocking nerves in the neck. For this treatment to work, you may have to have a series of injections.

Electrical Signals

Electrical nerve stimulation can provide short-term pain relief, especially for different types of muscle pain, by sending low-voltage electrical signals from a small device to the painful area through pads placed on the skin. While researchers aren't sure why it works, they think it may either interrupt the nerve signals to the brain or stimulate the body's natural painkillers.

Pain Pumps

Special pumps can be placed to allow a patient to push a button to deliver pain medicine to their spinal cord, bringing relief without the side effects that often come with taking drugs by mouth. Patients can also get a psychological boost by having direct control over their pain. These spinal drug pumps are used most often by people with cancer pain, but also by patients with other types of pain who had side effects when taking the medicine by mouth.

Future Solutions

One of the most promising research areas involves collecting stem cells from a patient's bone marrow and injecting them into an area, such as the lower back, that has become painful because tissue has weakened. The hope is that the stem cells will build new, healthy tissue and relieve the pain for good.