



How to deal with, and prevent, physical pain

Pain is a fact of life for most of us.

Whether it's a stubbed toe or full-body pain from a chronic condition, we all can relate to the discomfort. Pain is both a physical sensation and an emotion. You can choose how you react and treat your pain. That allows it to be bearable.

1 in 5
adults experience
pain daily

Most common spots?
Back, hips, knees and feet¹



What is chronic pain?

Chronic pain² is any pain that lingers for three months or longer, with or without treatment. It can be constant or come and go. It can occur in bones, joints, muscles or even nerves. It can be sharp and sudden or dull and achy. Causes range from injuries and strains to arthritis, migraines, cancer or autoimmune disease.

Managing pain without medication

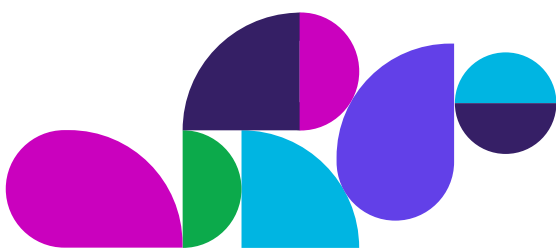
The good news is that most pain is treatable. Consider discussing these supportive options with your doctor or other licensed healthcare professional:^{1,2,3}

- Therapeutic massage
- Weight management—including a healthy meal plan
- Low-impact physical activity
- Stress reduction
- Acupuncture
- Mindfulness meditation and relaxation
- Mind-body practices like yoga or tai chi
- Getting enough rest and sleeping on a supportive mattress
- Working with a physical therapist and/or occupational therapist
- Finding mental health support and working on coping strategies with a trusted therapist



Focus on what you can do, not what you can't

It is important for you and your doctor to understand the source of your pain as much as possible.² Then you can find the right ways to help alleviate the symptoms and their effects. Living with chronic pain can be hard. It can be helpful to remember the parts of your body that don't hurt. Find gratitude in the things that are going well in your life.



Maintain your mobility

Following a few simple guidelines can help you keep moving, hopefully without aggravating chronic pain or creating new pain.^{4,5,6}

✔ Warm up and cool down

It can be as simple as stretching at the beginning and end of each day. It should be part of your usual exercise routine.

✔ Move every day

Regular movement keeps your muscles and bones strong, your joints lubricated and boosts your mood.⁵ Consider low-impact exercises like walking, swimming, riding a bike, and even gardening and household chores.

✔ Listen to your body

Pace yourself and take breaks. Take note of what makes the pain worse and limit or avoid it. Find more activities that you enjoy and are comfortable doing.

✔ Single it out

If you have some soreness in specific spots, consider over-the-counter topical pain relievers or patches. These can create spot heat or irritation, so read and follow directions. Apply moist heat or a cold pack if it helps relieve symptoms. Take care not to place directly on the skin to avoid injury.

Maintaining mobility—and dealing with and preventing pain—are goals you can reach by taking one step at a time.

Learn how we can help support you on your wellness journey.
To sign up or learn more, go to
[Go.Livongo.com.](https://www.livongo.com)

¹<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33990113/#:~:text=Using%20a%20chronic%20pain%20module,%2C%20knee%2C%20or%20foot%20pain.>

²<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/09/understanding-managing-pain>

³<https://www.apa.org/topics/pain>

⁴<https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/healthcare-professionals/prescribing/nonopioid-pain-therapies.html>

⁵<https://www.health.harvard.edu/exercise-and-fitness/improving-your-mobility>

⁶<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/back-pain/7-ways-to-treat-chronic-back-pain-without-surgery>

Las comunicaciones del programa Livongo están disponibles en español. Al inscribirse, podrá configurar el idioma que prefiera para las comunicaciones provenientes del medidor y del programa. Para inscribirse en español, llame al 800-945-4355 o visite [Hola.Livongo.com](https://www.livongo.com)

© Teladoc Health, Inc. All rights reserved. Teladoc Health marks and logos are owned by Teladoc Health, Inc. All programs and services are subject to applicable terms and conditions.

Should I give in to **cravings?**

Hot, crisp, salty french fries.
Goosey, warm chocolate cake.
A juicy steak grilled to perfection.
What are you craving?

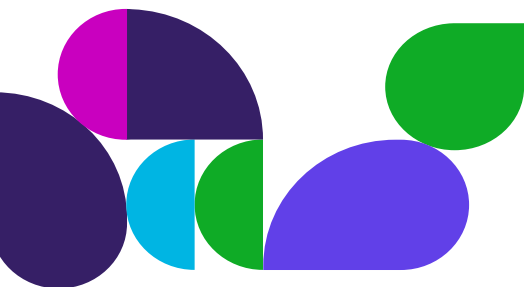


Food cravings are **natural**.

We all have a taste for something specific from time to time. Studies show that certain foods trigger positive feelings in our brains. These foods usually have rich, sweet or salty qualities that we enjoy.¹ There could also be specific reasons your body is craving the nutrients a specific food provides. Or your craving could be motivated by emotions, environment, stress or boredom.

Everyone's heard of the proverbial pregnancy craving of pickles and ice cream. Like most cravings, these could be hormonal, stress-related, due to lack of sleep or emotional in nature.¹

It's important to understand why you're having a craving. The goal is not to eliminate it or ignore what your body and brain are saying. Before you give in and eat whatever your heart or mind is telling you to, stop and think about what kind of craving you're having.



Hunger versus craving

Physical hunger increases gradually. Cravings strike suddenly and are for specific foods. Ask yourself: Are you hungry or bored? Tired or thirsty? To prevent cravings:¹

- Eat lean protein and fiber throughout the day.
- Stay hydrated.
- Eat nutritious meals and snacks at regular intervals.
- Avoid highly processed foods.



Environmental cravings

You're walking by a pizza shop and it smells delicious. All you can think about is a pepperoni slice, but you just had lunch. This is a craving brought on by your environment. It could be an advertisement or a sign that plants the seed. Try to limit exposure to these cues. Avoid cooking shows, social media posts and videos of food if these trigger your cravings.¹

Association cravings

Some foods are associated with certain activities or locations. What would movie night be without a bucket of salty, buttery popcorn, a box of candy and a giant soda? It is a matter of learned behaviors. You can change your routine and reduce these types of cravings.¹

The four D's

Cravings can go away as quickly as they appear.¹ With that in mind, consider the four D's:

Delay eating what you crave.

Distract yourself with another activity.

Deflect your desire with a sugar-free beverage or a stick of gum.

Downsize your portion if you give in.

**By being mindful and managing your cravings,
sweet, salty, spicy and more can be yours.**

Learn how we can help support you on your wellness journey.
To sign up or learn more, go to
[Go.Livongo.com.](https://www.livongo.com)

¹<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/cravings/#>

Las comunicaciones del programa Livongo están disponibles en español. Al inscribirse, podrá configurar el idioma que prefiera para las comunicaciones provenientes del medidor y del programa. Para inscribirse en español, llame al 800-945-4355 o visite [Hola.Livongo.com](https://www.livongo.com)

© Teladoc Health, Inc. All rights reserved. Teladoc Health marks and logos are owned by Teladoc Health, Inc. All programs and services are subject to applicable terms and conditions.