

Relief from Pain



Dying Kindness

different types of pain

- Some pain is acute and temporary, the consequence of an injury or illness. Pain relief is focused on recovery and is expected to be temporary.
- Some pain is chronic, lasting months or years. Pain relief is focused on management, creating sufficient relief to be able to return to daily living.



consequences of long-term, chronic pain

- depression
- isolation
- missed work, reduced income
- increased disability, cascading symptoms



pain relief medicine and abuse

Most pain can be treated with medicine, which may risk addiction or abuse. This is most acutely and tragically true for opioids.

When treating patients with hope for recovery, avoiding addiction is a relevant concern.

However, sometimes concerns about addiction may be misplaced if the patient is already actively dying. It can be a kindness to focus on comfort at the end of life instead.



THC and pain relief

THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, is actively being studied for its effectiveness in providing pain relief. The results have been mixed, but generally positive.

Our experience of pain is the result of nerves sending signals to the brain, and THC may blunt those signals getting through.

Some people have found that THC is highly effective, particularly in treating pain and nausea associated with their cancer treatments.



mindfulness and pain relief

Mindfulness practices have been shown to be an effective alternative form of pain relief. This is not instant, but can be a longer-lasting and non-addictive method for managing chronic pain.

Mindfulness must be chosen by the patient and practiced regularly in order to be effective.



“relief from pain” has degrees

- Pain medication interfere with ability to be alert and engaged
- Pain medication can be modulated to allow for being aware of your surroundings either by limiting the amount or relief or setting a schedule
- Some types of pain relief can hasten death
- It's OK to specify preferences about types and amount of pain relief

