



## The importance of relaxation

When we are in pain, we sometimes feel tense or anxious. Our breathing may become very shallow and fast, making us feel a little dizzy.

The first thing to do is to concentrate on how you are breathing. Instead of taking lots of short, shallow breaths, try to take slow deep breaths.

You may find it helpful to put one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach while you practice.

As you breathe in, your stomach should rise a little and fall as you breathe out. Your upper chest should remain fairly still.

Try and get into a gentle rhythm. Once you have managed this, try listening to your favourite music, and let your mind relax.

## Calmness

You might want to try imagining yourself in a place that is calm and peaceful. It can be a make believe place, or a place where you have happy memories. Try to use all your senses e.g. what can you smell? hear? feel? Keep this image in your mind as you relax.

You might also want to try a CD to help with your relaxation. Some CDs are simply relaxing music with natural sounds whereas others include verbal instructions to take you through a relaxation programme.

## Department of Rheumatology

Physiotherapy	0121 333 8221
Occupational Therapy	0121 333 8213

## Data Protection

We collect information about our young people and families relevant to their diagnosis and treatment. We store it in written records and on computer. We may have to share some of your information with other people and organisations. If you have any questions and/or do not want us to share that information with others, please talk to the Adolescent Rheumatology team or contact PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on (0121) 333 8403/8611.



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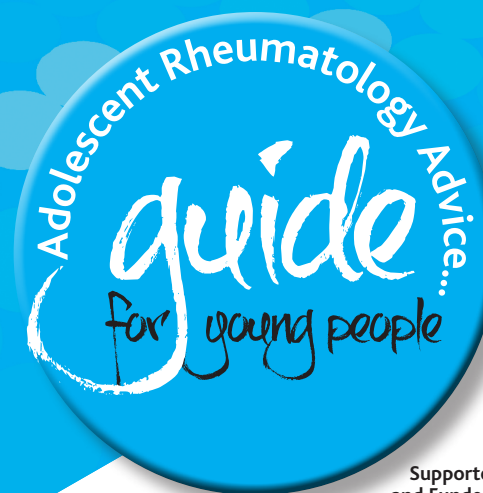


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# What a pain!

What you can do to help yourself when you're in pain.



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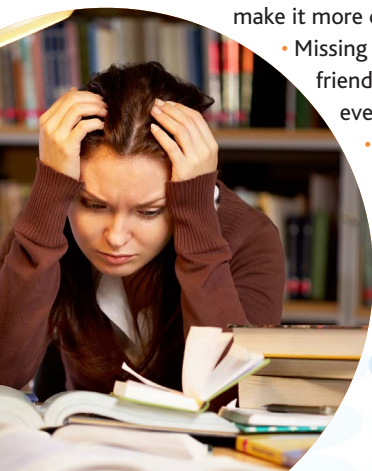
Pain is very complicated. The way in which our brain interprets pain and how we react to it depends on many factors.

Everyone reacts or copes differently. Some of the things which affect our feelings of pain include:

- How we are feeling e.g. fear or worry
- Previous experiences of pain
- Reactions of other people around you
- How well we sleep

Despite being in pain, it's important to try and maintain a normal lifestyle because:-

- It is important to try and gain a sense of control and not let pain rule your life
- Becoming inactive and unfit can make the stresses and strains of everyday life on your body harder to deal with and may make it more difficult to get a good nights sleep
- Missing out on school/college and seeing friends can leave you feeling down or even depressed
- Having no distractions means you focus on the pain more



## Suggestions to help with Pain

- Always remember to take medicines
- Ask the doctor about taking some extra pain relief
- Try taking a warm bath
- Try some gentle stretches in the warm water
- Try some exercises as suggested by the Physiotherapist
- Keep warm
- Try a hot pack over joints before exercising. If this doesn't help try a cold pack
- Warm clothes on the radiator before putting them on
- Warm your bed with a hot water bottle or electric blanket
- Don't miss school, if necessary arrange late entry to school
- Don't spend long periods in one position
- Keep mobile
- Ensure good posture during all activities
- Avoid remaining in a bent position for long periods of time
- Ask the physiotherapists about splints to help relieve joint pain
- Be as independent as you possibly can wherever possible. Ask the OT about handy gadgets
- Keep occupied with a favourite activity and try and distract yourself
- Don't bottle up your worries
- Make contact with other young people to share ideas about coping with pain
- Ask your parents or friends to give you a gentle massage
- Discuss your pain with your doctor
- Make sure you get a good nights sleep ( ask for a copy of our sleep advice sheet )



Everyone reacts and copes differently to pain

Keep busy, distraction stops you focussing on the pain

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