

GUIDE

FIRST CONSULTATION PAIN MEDICINE



SIPPT
Societal Impact of Pain



BACKGROUND

Chronic pain is felt in a very subjective way and also experienced in a very individualised way.

It cannot be replicated because it is unique and exclusive to each person.

These constraints are a challenge for the health professional, who, in order to better assess chronic pain, it should fit in with the reported complaints. The better the person with chronic pain is prepared for the appointment, the more targeted the therapeutic approach proposed by the health professional will be.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the first consultation aims to know your medical situation in order to

- Allow the doctor to better understand the clinical picture;
- Integrate a diagnosis more easily;
- Consider the need to request exams;
- Provide better orientation for treatment.

FIRST CONSULTATION

The first consultation aims to frame a diagnosis, propose a plan and initiate the best therapeutic approach.

Subsequent consultations may be necessary to evaluate its effectiveness, complement the initial evaluation or suggest additional treatments.

To increase the effectiveness of a Pain Consultation, the person seeking it should prepare in advance and observe the need to spend some time, in two fundamental steps:



1. WHAT SHOULD I **BRING** TO THE FIRST CHRONIC PAIN CONSULTATION

a | Information about my medical history:

- What chronic diseases I have and their evolution;
- What is my chronic medication and how long have I been taking it (name of the medicines, periodicity);
- What medication I have already taken for pain and why it was suspended;
- What adverse reactions do I attribute to certain medicines (allergies, swelling, increased blood pressure, constipation, urinary retention, etc?)-
What are the most recent exams I have had related to my pain (X-ray, CT scan, MRI, electromyography, etc.);
- What interventions (surgical or others - physiotherapy, acupuncture, shock waves, etc.) have I had for my pain;
- If I have had previous hospitalisations, I should bring the discharge reports.

b | How should I present myself at the Chronic Pain Consultation:

- Calm, relaxed and receptive to the questions I will be asked.
- Preferably go with someone (It is very important to share the information received with someone you trust).
- Wear comfortable clothing, which is easy to undress/dress in case there is a need to be examined.



2. HOW CAN I **DESCRIBE** MY COMPLAINTS THE MOST ADEQUATELY

Each person should reflect on his chronic pain, its background, and how it affects his life.

Therefore, you should describe the particularities of your pain. You can ask for help from those who live with you.

If you are already familiar with the “PAIN DIARY” you should take it with you and filled in (at least in the last month).

Otherwise this matter may be addressed by your doctor.

1. PAIN DURATION

When did it start (days, months or years)?

Was it always the same as I have now or has it worsened over time?

Do I think it is associated with some factor (fall, accident, illness, etc...) or event (traumatic event)?

2. PAIN CHARACTERISTICS

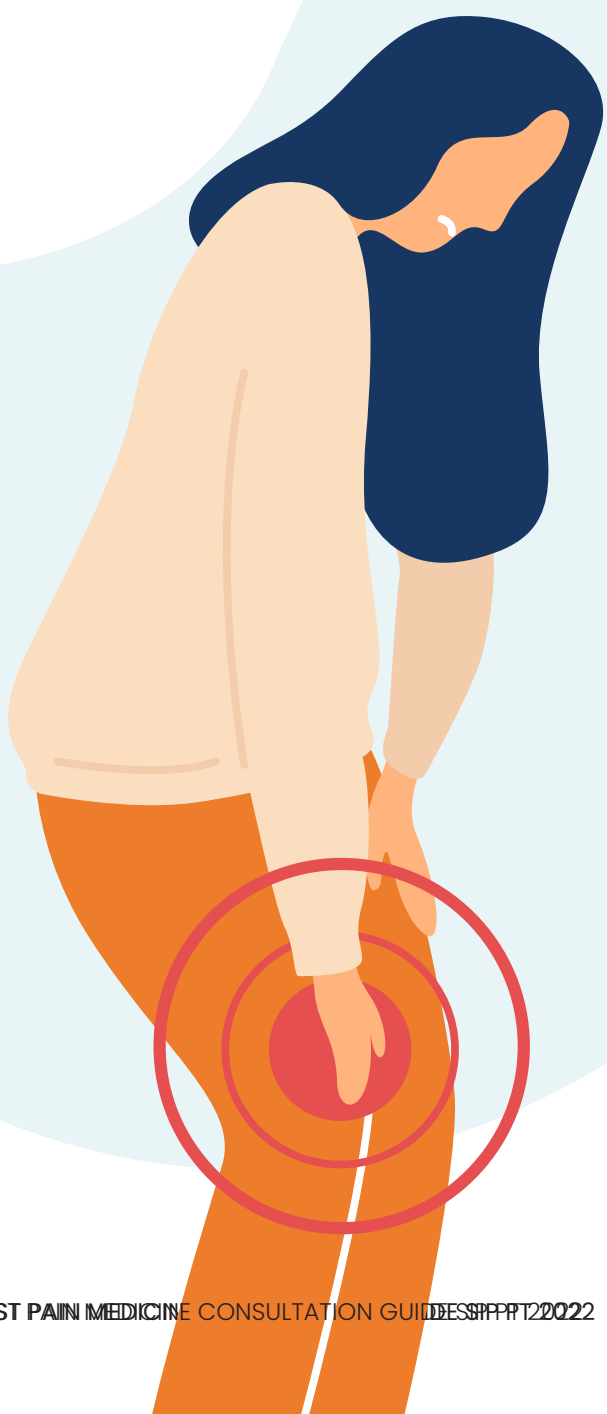
Is it constant or does it appear in periods?

Is it aggravated by certain events (movements, postures, etc.) or

aggravated at certain times of the day or night?

What relieves the pain?





3. PAIN INTENSITY

Is too much or too little intense?

What activities am I unable to do?

Was I able to do them before?

Does it prevent me from falling asleep or wake me up during my sleep?

4. PAIN LOCATION

Where is the pain located?

Is it a localised pain or does it go to other places??? Which ones?

5. PAIN RELIEF

What medicines do I take for pain?

How do they relieve me?

Of the medicines I have taken, which ones have relieved me the most?

Which ones have been less effective, and what undesirable effects have they caused?

6. HOW DO I DEFINE MY PAIN

Trying to define it:

Which synonyms best describe pain? (heaviness, tightness, oppression, claw, knot, stab, shock, burning, stinging, pricking, tingling, itching or others).

7. HOW THE PAIN AFFECTS MY LIFE QUALITY

Since I have had this pain, have I:

Sleep worse?; Feel sadder?; Feel more irritated?
Feeling more isolated?; Feeling misunderstood?
Feeling slower?; Among other aspects

8. AT THE END OF THE CONSULTATION

When you leave the consultation, you should ask the doctor to clarify all your doubts.

Make sure you know what exams have been requested and what treatments have been proposed; make sure you know how to take your medication.



This Pain Medicine First Consultation Guide was sponsored by:

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ABOUT SIP PT

SIP is an organisation supported by several entities that aims to raise awareness and sensitivity towards pain, as well as the need to modify pain-related policies. In Portugal, SIP PT is made up of Health Professionals and Patient Associations who work together in order to reduce the social impact of pain in Portugal, bringing science and society together in the same field.

Find out more about SIP PT at:

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Member associations of SIP PT

