



Why is pain management important?

Martha experienced low back pain on and off for years. She also recently noticed numbness in her right toes and foot. She thought the new numbness was from her diabetes. But then the numbness started to include her leg and made her back pain worse. When pain started keeping her from doing everyday activities, she decided to talk to her provider. After getting an exam, Martha learned what was causing her leg and back pain. She was referred to a Physical Therapist and learned how to protect the nerves in her leg so it could heal, which helped lower her pain. By taking steps to address her pain, Martha was able to avoid surgery or narcotics. Addressing and managing your pain is important so you can stay active, mobile, and enjoy life.

What can you look for?

- Numbness or weakness
- Hard time with bowel or bladder control
- Loss of balance
- Tingling
- Pain

Evaluation of pain is important in finding out whether the pain can be stopped or managed. Finding the source of the pain is the first step in pain management.

Questions to ask yourself:

- Have you noticed that pain stops you from doing the things you want to do?
- Has pain changed the quality of your life?





What can you do?

- Be physically active
- Maintain a healthy diet
- Practice healthy sleep habits
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and recreational drug use

Where can you find support?

- **Behavioral Health Consultant** and **Behavioral Pain Consultant** can support you if your pain affects your mood and sleep and suggest ways to improve your quality of life.
- **Physical Medicine** and **Rehabilitation Provider** can assist with diagnosing pain and building a treatment plan.
- **Physical Therapist** can assist in determining the cause of the pain and provide education about how to decrease it.
- Your **Primary Care Team** can find the source of your pain and offer treatments.

For more information, visit <https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/aging-well/>

Alaska Native Health Campus Resources

Anchorage

(907) 729-3300

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

(907) 631-7880

- Chiropractic Therapy
- Exercise
- Learning Circles
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Primary Care
 - Behavioral Health Consultant
 - Behavioral Pain Consultant
- Integrated Physical Therapist
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Provider
- Traditional Healing

