

PAIN MANAGEMENT

Pain is the most common reason why patients seek medical help.

Pain can be classified as neuropathic pain (pressure or injury to nerve cells) or nociceptive pain (activation of normal pain fibres), acute or chronic pain, incident (upon activity such as movement, coughing) or breakthrough pain (pain occurring between regular doses of pain medication).

Compounding for pain management is a whole new approach to treatment. Compounding can offer solutions to the limitations of commercial pain medications such as unique dosage forms, unavailable medications, allergies, bad tasting or intolerable medication.

Often commercial pain medication presents with many side effects as it enters the body via the gastric area causing irritation and other serious side effects.

Topical creams/lotions/gels offer the advantage of delivering the 'active ingredient' to the site of application. **Transdermal preparations** when applied to the site of action actually go through the skin and directly enter the bloodstream. This avoids the "first pass effect" which is the liver metabolism. This in itself eliminates or drastically reduces the potential for drug interactions. We can apply a lower level of 'active ingredient' as we do not need to survive gastric juice metabolism, rate of gastric emptying or motility and also we can use known classic effective ingredients transdermally without the risk of serious side effects.

Oral dosage forms such as capsules, lozenges, flavoured oral suspensions can be more palatable; capsules can also be modified as slow release capsules staying in the body longer.

Rectal preparations, such as suppositories are ideal for patients unable to take medication orally (i.e. nausea, vomiting, difficulty swallowing, obstruction, altered consciousness).

Nasal Preparations such as sprays can deliver medication intranasally. This alternative route of administration has advantages in terms of rapid onset of action.

Some of the most commonly prescribed ingredients include: Ketamine, Ketoprofen, Lignocaine, amitriptyline, baclofen, capsaicin, tetracaine, benzocaine, and gabapentin.