



# Research Article

## Highlight

**Guidelines on the management of chronic pain in children.**  
Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020.  
<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/guideline-for-the-management-of-chronic-pain-in-children>

### *In a Nutshell:*

**Managing children's chronic pain requires a family-centred, multimodal approach by an interdisciplinary team of trained health professionals.**

Inadequately managed chronic pain may negatively impact children's emotional, physical, and social development and function. Additionally, it can affect the lives of the child's family and caregivers. Children's chronic pain care should be prioritized and optimized.

Access to pain management is a fundamental human right.



### *The Details:*

**The World Health Organization has published a number of evidence-based recommendations to optimally manage children's chronic pain using physical, psychological, and pharmacologic modalities.**

#### Recommendations:

- Psychological treatment through cognitive behavioural therapy and related interventions (e.g., acceptance and commitment, behavioural, or relaxation therapy) may be beneficial.
- Physical therapies may be used, either alone or in combination with other treatments.
- Appropriate pharmacological management, if required, should be tailored to specific indications and conditions. There is no available evidence that evaluates the use of opioids as compared to other medications or pain treatments in children with chronic pain.
- Time-limited use of opioids can be considered in children with chronic pain, particularly in those with life-limiting conditions and children receiving end of life care.
- Opioids should be prescribed by a trained healthcare provider. Opioids should be given at the lowest appropriate dose and duration possible and must be regularly reviewed in order to ensure the fewest possible adverse events.
- When prescribing opioids for at-home use, families should be given advice on how to safely store and dispose of unused medication.



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