

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR PAIN

### PAIN FACTS

- Pain is normal
- Pain is complex
- Pain does not always mean damage
- Pain is helped by exercise
- Pain is worsened by stress and tension
- Pain is balanced by paced activity
- Pain can be managed by you!

Chronic Pain can be described as pain lasting beyond the expected healing time of the tissues.

When we are in pain we naturally restrict our movements and activities to try to protect ourselves. If we continue to do this over a long period of time joints become stiff, our muscles become weaker, and the way we move changes. This results in our bodies becoming less 'fit', and increases stresses and strains on other areas. This can actually cause us to feel more pain and affect our quality of life by restricting our abilities.

By gradually building up your exercise tolerance you can regain strength, flexibility and stamina. Tissues will have a better blood supply, and will be less 'grumpy'.

Exercise can also help to improve sleep, control weight and reduce stress and tension.