

## Neuropathic Pain

Pain arising as a direct consequence of a lesion or disease affecting the somatosensory system.

- Peripheral (radicular, polyneuropathy, post herpetic neuralgia, Trigeminal Neuralgia, post-surgical, trauma)
- Central (MS, CVA, spinal cord injury, Phantom Limb)
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS)

Adequate diagnosis of the aetiology of neuropathic pain is essential as targeted therapy will improve health outcomes. Patients may benefit from referral to the SAHLN Pain Service if –

- Diagnosis of the underlying cause is uncertain
- Not adequately managed by appropriate pharmacotherapy
- Interventions (epidural steroids, nerve blocks, sympathetic blocks \ neurolysis) are required

### Information Required

- Diagnosis – aetiology, symptoms, site, neuropathic signs
- Current and past therapies including outcomes – pharmacological & non-pharmacological
- Psycho-social history
- Brief Pain Inventory

### Investigations Required

- Copies of relevant investigations – blood tests, scans
- May require Nerve Conduction \ EMG testing

### Fax Referrals to

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| • Repatriation General Hospital Outpatient Clinic | Fax: 8277 9476 |
| • Flinders Medical Centre Pain Unit               | Fax: 8374 1758 |

## Red Flags

Red flags should prompt immediate GP referral to **Emergency Department**

- New onset neuropathy especially associated with motor weakness or control
- Unexplained weight loss, fevers, night sweats

### Suggested GP Management

- Appropriate use of anti-neuropathic pain agents such as – amitriptyline, pregabalin, carbamazepine
- Avoidance of opioid analgesics
- Identification of psycho-social factors & referral to a community psychologist

### Clinical Resources

- Special Interest Group on Neuropathic Pain of the International Association for the Study of Pain [www.neupsig.org](http://www.neupsig.org)
- Health, NSW Government. Hunter Integrated Pain Service. [www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/pain](http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/pain)
- Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP). Neuropathic Pain. A management update. [www.racgp.org.au/download/documents/AFP/2013/March/201303votrube.pdf](http://www.racgp.org.au/download/documents/AFP/2013/March/201303votrube.pdf)

General Information to assist with referrals and the and Referral templates for FMC and RGH are available to download from the SALHN Outpatient Services website [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients)

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