

## The Truth about Pain

Myth	vs.	Reality
<b>Pain is an unavoidable consequence of growing old.</b>		Pain is common in older nursing home residents, but it is not inevitable. It does not have to be tolerated, because effective treatments are available.
<b>Residents with dementia aren't able to report their pain.</b>		Several studies have shown that even residents with moderate to severe dementia can reliably report pain.
<b>Pain is mostly an emotional or psychological problem.</b>		Although pain can cause negative emotions that can worsen pain perception, there are always physical reasons for pain. Psychological issues that affect the pain experience should be identified and addressed.
<b>Health professionals are the experts about pain.</b>		The person suffering with pain is the expert. Pain is best described by the person who feels it, as it is a complex, subjective experience.
<b>Any painful condition causes the same amount and type of pain in all people.</b>		Pain is perceived differently by different people. It is affected by many factors such as previous injury, stress, emotions, and fatigue.
<b>Not much can be done to relieve pain in LTC residents.</b>		There is much that can be done to relieve pain. A pain management care plan should include drug and non-drug approaches. Pain control must be individualized and may require several trials using different strategies.

Adapted from *Geriatric Pain: Educational Resources for Providers: Pain Myths*. Available online at <http://www.geriatricpain.org/Content/Education/Provider/Pages/default.aspx>. Accessed July 31, 2014.