

# Community rules and guidelines

We rely on all members to help keep these discussion forums a safe place for people to share and view information. These forum exists to create a meeting place for people who are living with, or supporting those with chronic pain. We aim to improve our quality of life, share knowledge and tips for pain management, discuss the social, financial and other impacts of living with chronic pain, and connect with people who can understand and relate to our condition.

This is a supportive environment in which people can speak and be heard, meet new friends, share stories and enjoy themselves. Occasionally messages might be misinterpreted or altogether inappropriate for this forum. For this reason, we need a few rules and guidelines to follow.

## **Community Rules:**

- 1.No abuse, insults, foul language, personal attacks, sexually explicit content, bullying, defamatory comments, or general nastiness.
- 2.No posting of the names of any Doctor or Clinician without their permission and/or knowledge and without the permission of the Board of Chronic Pain Australia.
- 3.No solicitation. This includes Studies and Surveys, advertisement of chronic pain treatment devices, medicines or other goods and services that are for sale.
- 4.No spam. Members are allowed to share information via links, however, business advertising or attempts to drive traffic to outside sites for private gain is not permitted.
- 5.Please be respectful when using the Private Messaging system. If you are being harassed through the PM system, please contact a moderator immediately.

If you wish to have a link placed on our website, you must seek the approval of the Board of Chronic Pain Australia. To do this, please email us at: [national.office@chronicpinaustralia.org.au](mailto:national.office@chronicpinaustralia.org.au)

## **Moderation**

A team of moderators have been entrusted with the ability to intervene when these Community Rules have been breached. However, due to the dynamic nature and the sheer volume of posts, we can't immediately read everything written – therefore much of the responsibility for maintaining our friendly environment lies with you. Members can report these via the “Report To Moderator” button. We reserve the right to permanently deactivate the accounts of users who breach our community rules.

Threads from users who are no longer on the forums may be archived (locked or unpublished) at the discretion of moderators.

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## The Five Steps for getting the most out of this forum:

- **Be respectful.**

We are here to assist and share with one another, not to judge the personal choices of others. This includes being respectful of differing lifestyle choices, treatment choices, religions and political beliefs. Private disagreements should be handled through private message systems and not aired in the forum.

- **Be a genuine person**

All of the basic rules of human etiquette still apply in online forums. When you treat others politely and with kindness, interactions are more enjoyable for all involved. Anonymity is no excuse for rude behaviour that would not be tolerated in the world outside the internet.

- **Be helpful**

Offer your opinion and support to others that are posting on the forum in a considerate manner. Negative attitudes can be contagious and detract energy from more helpful ways of coping with tough situations. When replying to sensitive topics, consider that the posting member might be stressed, depressed, or confused. Somebody in this condition may be struggling to cope and unable to handle criticism at that moment. Please exercise patience and compassion when helping one another.

- **Be responsible for your contributions.**

Some of the challenges facing people with chronic pain are deeply personal. Before posting, consider whether you are hoping for advice, to connect, or to vent. Sharing our personal issues creates a vulnerability; if you are looking to rant but not open to feedback then writing in a personal diary, or chatting to a close friend might be a better option than a forum (which is a place of discussion). When sharing, bear in mind that the replies from others may not be what you want to hear. You always have the option to take advice on board or ignore it without allowing it to upset you. Somebody else's opinion is just somebody else's opinion.

- **Be responsible when offering advice.**

Many experiences of living with chronic pain differ amongst individuals. Some treatment options may help some people and not others. Your experience is a valuable contribution to a discussion, however remember that others may have had different experiences. This does not mean anybody is wrong or right; we can all learn something from considering a different perspective without needing to take offense or attempt to force beliefs onto others in an inflammatory manner. Please seek medical advice before adopting peer advice.