

Types of Pain

What are the different types of pain experienced?

Patients with sickle cell disease can experience **acute pain** (due to a specific pain episode) and/or **chronic pain** (due to damage that has occurred over time). Talk to your medical team to better understand how to manage these different types of pain.

Tips to prevent pain:

- Help your child to manage stress. Unmanaged stress can trigger a pain episode and also make a pain episode worse.
- For young children, help by labeling their feelings. For example, “It looks like you are feeling nervous”. For older children, encourage them to express their feelings openly.
- Practice and model tools to manage stress such as relaxation, good sleep, and regular low-impact exercise.

Tips for managing pain:

Deep breathing, relaxation and distraction can be helpful if they are having mild pain or waiting for their pain medications to work.

- Practice slow deep breathing (use bubbles, use a pinwheel, pretend to blow out birthday cake candles).
- Play music they enjoy, massage/rub their back, read stories, sing songs together, take a warm bath, play with pets, say prayers together

