

*This video is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Please consult your healthcare provider for advice that is right for you and your medical condition.*

**QUESTION: What is the best way to manage my pain?**

**Tammy Utset, MD:** That's very much an individual question, because pain varies a lot from patient to patient. Some patients have intermittent pain and some patients have chronic, daily pain, and some patients have extreme pain and some people have moderate pain, and people react differently to their pain. Certainly all patients who have fairly frequent pain need to try to develop coping mechanisms so that they don't have a panic response to their pain, because I think that really undermines their ability, and intensifies the pain itself. So if they have pain and they have a panic response that makes them think, "This must mean I'm dying," then the pain is 100 times worse. They need to be reassured and understand that the pain comes and goes and there's things you can do for the pain. You need to have open discussions with your doctors... So it's really an individual case-by-case management pain plan.

Alternative methods of pain management... sometimes are useful for lupus patients as well: cognitive therapy, biofeedback, acupuncture, some patients benefit from in addition to their standard lupus management. Because the pain can be difficult. Certainly a lot of lupus patients have chronic pain, and their pain level is one of the major predictive factors for work disability from lupus. It's a significant issue.