

# Wind-up

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When we are talking about pain and pain management you might notice that we refer to “wind-up” frequently but what exactly is “wind-up”?

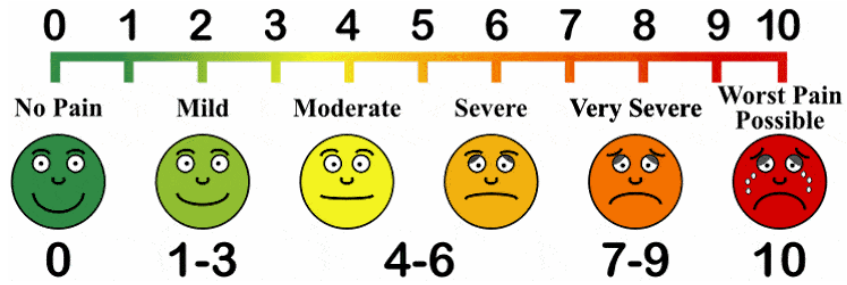
Picture this, you are walking through the living room at home and stub your toe on a table. You are going to feel some pain but it is more than likely going to be mild and short lived. However your nerves are now sensitized, ie “wind-up”, especially if you’re not provided with any anti-inflammatory/ analgesic medications or therapies.



Now let’s say you stub that same toe again next week. The pain stimulus stays the same; you still stubbed your toe on a table. The difference is that the nerves in that toe are in “wind-up” mode and that means the pain response is going to be exponentially greater and take longer to go away.



Your pain response is going to go from a mild 2 or 3 to a major 8 or 9 because your pain tolerance threshold has been reduced because the nerves are more easily stimulated. This is the concept of wind-up; you have introduced a painful stimulus to an area that is already hypersensitive.



So how do we prevent “wind-up”?

We are going to prevent wind-up by proactively giving pain medications and utilizing several different types of pain medications (multimodal pain management) prior to, during and after an event that is going to cause a pain response to occur, such as surgery. The aim of this approach is to calm the nerves before an insult occurs.