



## Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS): Promoting wise healthcare

Promoting wise healthcare. Healthcare is often described as ‘high value’ or ‘low value’<sup>1</sup>. Both are important to know about so you can get the right care, not care that is risky or has little benefit.

| High value care is  | Low value care is  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Effective</i> – evidence suggests that it works to produce a positive effect</li> <li>✓ <i>Safe</i> – there is low risk of harm</li> <li>✓ <i>Cost effective</i> – despite cost, the care provides benefit relative to alternative options</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ <i>Ineffective</i> – evidence suggests that the care will provide no or very little benefit</li> <li>✗ <i>Potentially harmful</i> – the risk of harm is greater than any likely benefit</li> <li>✗ <i>Not cost effective</i> – since the care is unlikely to provide benefit, the cost associated with care delivery could be used on other care options</li> </ul> |

### High value care for CRPS

Currently, there are not enough high quality studies for us to know what constitutes high value care for CRPS. Below are some general components of care that you should expect:

- ✓ A personalised rehabilitation management plan that focuses on education about your condition, available treatments (risks and benefits), and how you can actively manage your condition with healthy lifestyle habits.
- ✓ Rehabilitation as the first line of treatment usually includes graded exercises and techniques to help reduce the limb/body sensitivity.
- ✓ Use of medicines: your doctor may recommend medicines that are commonly used for other types of severe or persistent pain
- ✓ Sometimes, even though you are doing all the high value things, you may need more help and an on-referral to a rheumatologist or pain medicine specialist may be appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> Scott IA, Duckett SJ In search of professional consensus in defining and reducing low-value care Med J Aust 2015; 203 (4): 179-181. || doi: 10.5694/mja14.01664



### Low value care for CRPS:

- ✘ Use of opioid medications (these have a significant risk of harm) or other medicines when they are not indicated, or when the risk of harm outweighs potential benefits.
- ✘ “invasive” medical procedures such as nerve blocks, delivery of medicines intravenously, and surgical approaches have largely been shown not to work, or have evidence of limited benefit and risk of harm, or no clear evidence for benefit or harm and they should not be offered.

### Important questions to ask your health professional

Here are [5 important questions](#) (available in 12 different languages) from the [Choosing Wisely](#) initiative. These are the recommended questions that you should ask your health professional about CRPS to help you decide what the right care is for you.

#### 5 important question to ask your health professional(s)

1. Do I really need this test, treatment or procedure?
2. What are the risks?
3. Are there simpler, safer options?
4. What happens if I don't do anything?
5. What are the costs?