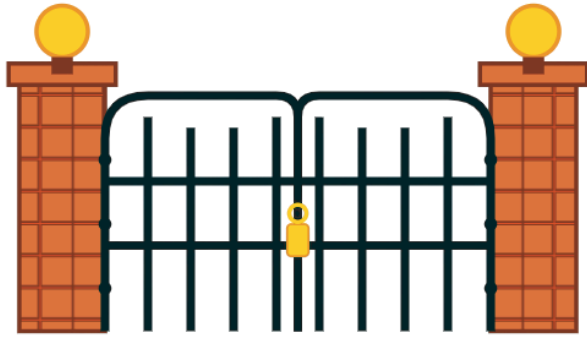
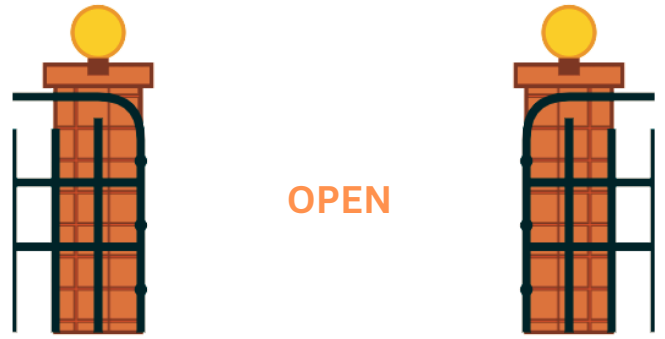


HOW PAIN WORKS IN YOUR BODY



Gate **CLOSED**

Fewer pain signals get through, and pain feels less intense.



Gate **OPEN**

More signals get through, and pain feels more intense.

ABOUT THE GATE

Pain signals from your body travel through a "gate" in your spinal cord before reaching your brain. This gate can be more open or closed.

HOW IT WORKS

When the gate is closed, fewer pain signals get to the brain. When it's open, more pain signals get through and pain feels stronger.

YOUR POWER!

You can learn ways to help close the gate and reduce pain. What you think, feel, and do can all make a difference!

Things that **CLOSE** the Gate

(These can help reduce pain)

- Using heat packs or TENS units
- Gentle massage and stretching
- Physical therapy (if prescribed)
- Using coping skills to manage stress
- Doing activities you enjoy
- Practicing relaxation techniques
- Guided/Self-Guided Imagery
(Imagination.Stanford.edu)

Things that **OPEN** the Gate

(These can make pain feel worse)

- Not moving or exercising enough
- Doing too much activity at once
- Feeling worried, scared, or angry
- Thinking about pain all the time
- Stopping activities you enjoy
- Dehydration
- Lack of sleep

Everyone's pain gate works differently, and it can change depending on the kind of pain.
Work with your care team/support system to figure out what helps close your gate.