MUSCULOSKELETAL PAIN

Assess patient factors

Are any of the following present?
- < 2 years old
- Uncontrolled cardiovascular disease, GI disorders, renal dysfunction or liver dysfunction (if NSAID being considered)
- Osteoarthritis diagnosis (if current pain is similar to existing osteoarthritis)

Are any of the following present?
- Increased intensity or change in character of pain
- Pelvic or abdominal pain unrelated to dysmenorrhea
- Nausea, vomiting, fever or signs of a systemic infection or disorder
- Visible joint changes, abnormal movement, weakness or inability to bear weight on any limb, or suspected fracture
- Pain due to trauma, such as a fall

Assess patient for red-flags

Assess symptoms

Pain or swelling of affected area

Any symptoms that suggest severe pain?
- Moderate to severe pain (>6 on a 10 point scale)
- Pain has persisted for longer than 2 weeks without significant improvement
- Pain has persisted longer than 7 days, without improvement, despite treatment

Mild discomfort
- RICE therapy; AND,
- OTC oral analgesics; or,
- OTC topical analgesics; or,
- OTC muscle relaxants

Follow up in 7 days

Pain improved or resolved?

Moderate discomfort
- RICE therapy; AND,
- OTC Acetaminophen; OR,
- Prescription strength NSAID

Refer

YES

NO

YES

NO

YES

NO

Refer

- Continue therapy until symptoms resolve (max of 2 weeks total)
- Discontinue medication once symptoms are fully resolved