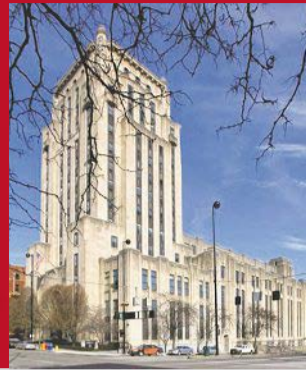


# Bengals' comeback falls short

Giving up 21 points in the first quarter too much to overcome in 30-20 loss to Pittsburgh [ Page C1 ]

# THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

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## County buildings could be condos

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2013



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## THE PRICE OF PAIN

# Treatment can be a guessing game

By Lisa Bernard-Kuhn | lbernard@enquirer.com

His patients come to him seeking liberation from a life plagued by pain.

Almost daily, Dr. Sairam Atluri hears the stories, examines the X-rays and medical files of Greater Cincinnatians whose pain has become so severe and has lingered for so long that simple tasks have become daunting.

Walking, holding their children, even sitting down hurts all over.

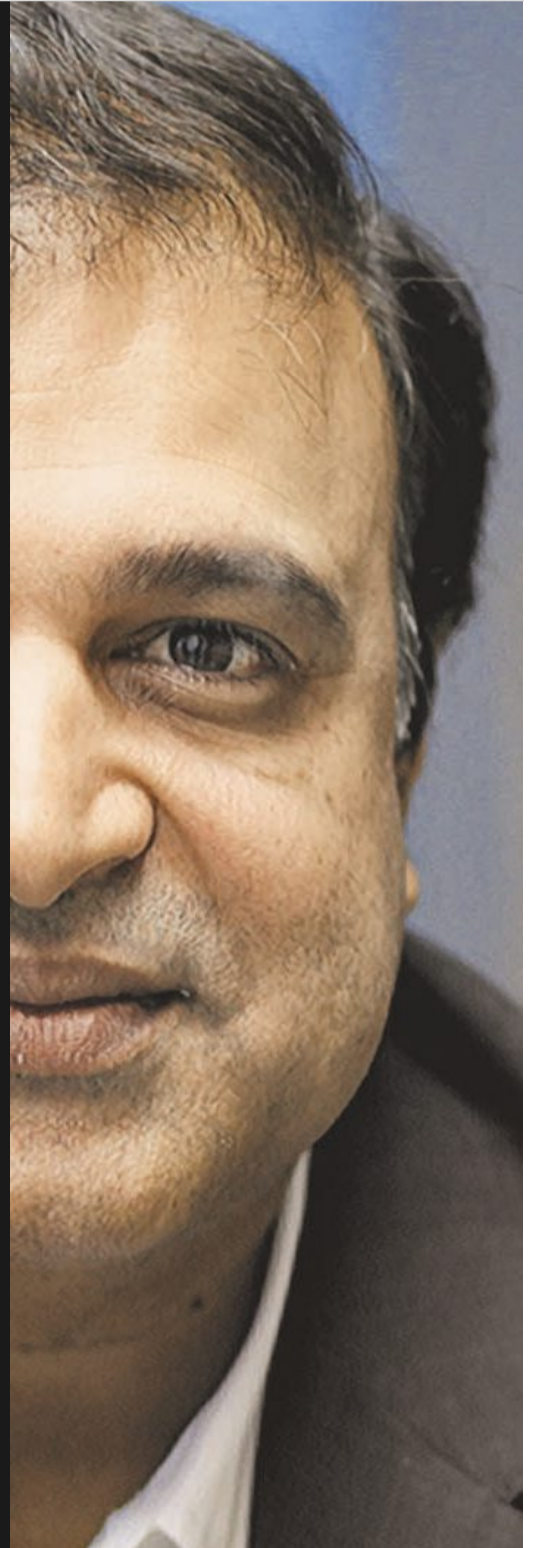
A pain management specialist, Atluri must help his patients strike a balance between their suffering and the risks of treatment. And, make no mistake, treatment of pain carries risk.

"We have to make the distinction: Is this something the patient is benefiting from or are they getting harmed?" he said.

What some doctors don't know about treating chronic pain can be deadly. The powerful opioids that in the last 15 years have become standard in pain treatment are to blame for nearly 17,000 American deaths each year and thousands more cases of addiction and overdose - despite little evidence that they effectively treat long-term pain.

"Are we too easily pulling the trigger to prescribe a pill rather than trying to figure out other

See PRICE OF PAIN, Page A4



Dr. Humam Akbik  
THE ENQUIRER/CARRIE COCHRAN

Dr. Sairam Atluri  
THE ENQUIRER/GLENN HARTONG



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