

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MANAGING PAIN?



Chronic pain should be treated using multiple approaches. Talk to your doctor about which ones are the best for you!

1

RELIABLE INFORMATION

When you are searching the internet, you may come across misinformation. Find evidenced-based information from credible sources such as PCORI, PubMed, and Cochrane. Keep an open mind that some areas of medicine require further study. Talk to your doctor about what you are experiencing and how you can manage your pain the best.

2

MEDICATION

There are a variety of medication options that can help you manage your pain such as disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs), over-the-counter drugs, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), antidepressants, opioids, and others. It's important to learn the benefits and risks of any medication your doctor prescribes.

3

THERAPY

There are many different types of therapies that can help manage pain such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy and counseling. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a proven therapeutic technique that can address the psychological impacts of living with pain.

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COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENT

When used alongside medical treatment, complementary treatments can help you manage pain. There are a variety of complementary treatments to consider including in your treatment plan such as acupuncture, chiropractic care, biofeedback, hypnosis, and many more.

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HEALTHY DIET

There is evidence to suggest diet is linked to pain, but there is no one-size-fits-all diet as everyone is different. Regardless of the approach you choose, make sure it addresses your nutritional needs to help you maintain energy and combat fatigue. Some diets to consider include an anti-inflammatory, gluten-free, or dairy-free, among others. Talk to a health care provider who is knowledgeable about nutrition.

6

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY/EXERCISE

Exercise may be the last thing you want to do when you're battling the fatigue, pain, and depression that come along with chronic pain conditions, but many people find that once they begin exercising, it helps ease symptoms. Options may range from walking, to strength training, water aerobics, Tai Chi and yoga. Your doctor can advise you on the safest options for you.

7

SLEEP HYGIENE

Unrefreshing sleep, which is common when you're experiencing chronic pain, can contribute to daytime fatigue. Look at your bedtime routine and "sleep hygiene" to make sure you're creating a relaxing environment. Go to sleep and get up at the same time. Keep your room cool and dark. Turn off screens 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime. Pacing your day is also important.

8

HEALTH TRACKING TOOLS

Keeping track of how you are feeling each day and in between appointments can help your doctor better understand how you are feeling. Tools like ArthritisPower can help you manage symptoms and track how you are feeling, sleeping, and reacting to medication. Visit www.ArthritisPower.org to learn more.

