



# **Pain Management**

Pain Seminar Information Booklet



**Your local healthcare provider**

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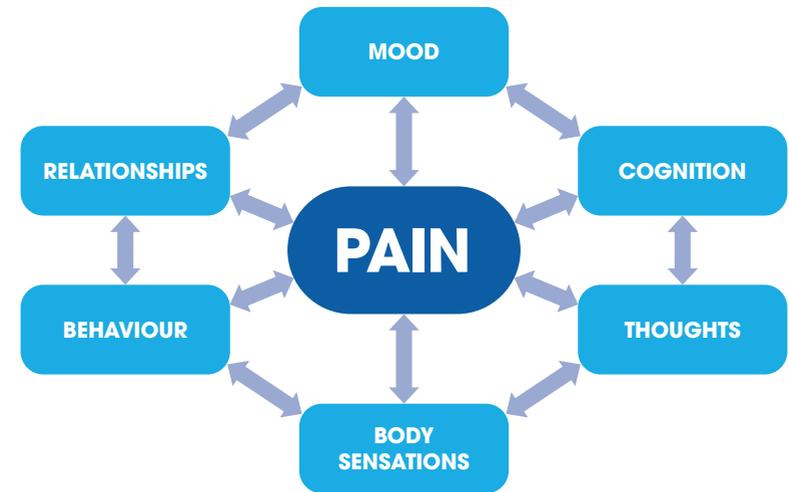
## WELCOME TO THE PAIN MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Chronic Pain (also known as persistent or long term pain) is often difficult to treat and can be associated with different types of injuries or disease processes.

Sometimes no underlying disease processes are found. People often expect a clear diagnosis and effective treatment-but these are rarely available, and medical procedures or medication may only be helpful for a minority of people.

The National Institute for Care Excellence (NICE) recognises that self management is key to helping people live with long term health conditions and therefore attending Pain Seminars can be very beneficial.

The Pain Seminar is offered to everyone who is referred to the Pain Management Service. With the support and guidance of the pain service staff you will be able to select your preferred next step and will be placed on the most appropriate pathway for you. This gives you the opportunity to access further interventions and professionals, thereby giving you more choice in your care.



### THE DONUT MODEL

This model shows how complex and complicated chronic pain is. It does not only affect one part of a person, but all parts.

The focus is on the components and variables around the 'DONUT'. If changes can be made to these components, then pain can be controlled more effectively or be managed better.

Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to take chronic pain away completely, but by using pain management strategies; one can learn how to have a meaningful life despite chronic pain.

## DEFINITION OF CHRONIC PAIN:

*Pain is a distressing experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage with sensory, emotional, cognitive and social components.*

Williams & Craig (2016)

A really useful video to watch on YouTube is:

**'Understanding Pain in Less than Five Minutes'**

## ACUTE PAIN vs CHRONIC PAIN

Acute pain is an important defence mechanism against damage to the body's tissues. However, Chronic (persistent) pain works in such a way that it changes the way the brain interprets the signals it gets, and so it is NOT always as a result of on going tissue damage. It is not being helpful in the same way as acute pain is.

**REMEMBER:** Chronic pain is very real! You cannot imagine it! It is not something your brain is making up! The brain is producing the pain- ultimately the brain is responsible for everything we see, taste, smell, feel and experience.

Tissue damage along with behaviours, beliefs and past experiences, change the way your brain works which leads to an increased pain experience. (The DONUT)

When this continues over a long period of time, the brain continues to produce pain signals even if the tissue damage has healed.

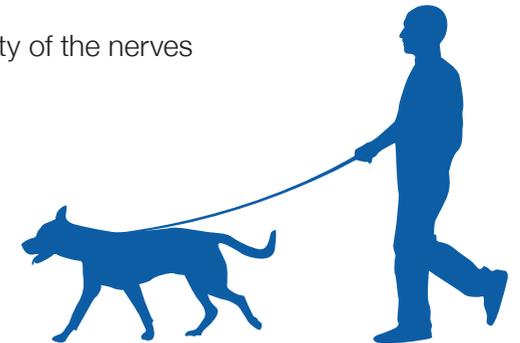
There are many ways to help with managing chronic pain, including the following strategies which can be used within each of the DONUT components.

## BEHAVIOURS/ACTIVITIES

Activity /exercises and stretches can all help, as long as they are done in a manageable way.

### Exercise/activity can:

- Help to release natural occurring painkillers that we store in our bodies, i.e. Endorphins, enkephalins, dynorphins, which in turn can improve mood and decrease stress
- Improve strength and power
- Improve joint mobility
- Help with sleep
- Help decrease the sensitivity of the nerves
- Help with weight loss
- Help to improve posture



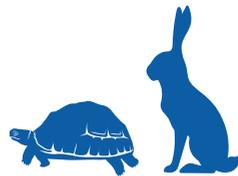
## WHAT EXERCISES/ACTIVITIES CAN BE DONE?

- Remember your precautions and keep safe!
- Any exercise is good e.g. simple chair exercise or more intense classes
- Pick activities that suit you
- Try to find exercises or activities that you enjoy, so it will be more sustainable
- Try to set some realistic, useful goals tailored to you
- Keep an exercise diary
- Regular exercise is the best

The Pain Management Service offers a choice of exercise groups to suit you.

## BEHAVIOUR

The best way to look at making changes in behaviour is by using **Pacing**.



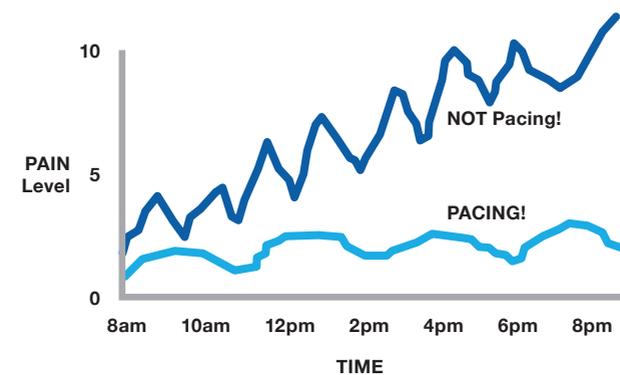
Pacing involves breaking activities up into manageable chunks, so that you can get things done without increasing your pain.

Pacing sounds like it should be easy to do, however it is a difficult strategy to implement, because it involves doing things differently to how they have been done before.

Pacing may take a few months to get used to, but the good news is that with patience and persistence everyone can sneak it into their daily life, and the more it is practiced, the more pacing then establishes itself as habit and becomes easier to do.

## GOOD DAYS VS BAD DAYS

Many people with chronic pain push or force themselves to get something done in the short-term, and then end up with much worse pain and are unable to do much for several days.



**Pacing** is the opposite of this. The purpose of pacing is to make it possible for you to be active every day while still keeping your pain under control.

## HOW TO PACE ACTIVITIES

Firstly, work out **base line tolerance**'s for all the activities you do. (i.e. how much of the activity you can do before noticing an increase in pain).

Then focus on:

### PLANNING

### PRIORITISING

### PROBLEM SOLVING

### PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

Remember: Do not rush activities thinking you will get more done within that time. That is not pacing.

Slowly, over time, you can increase how often and how long you are doing things for and your tolerance will change.

Beware of obstacles such as thoughts that can get in the way of pacing.

Remember to set goals. Think about what you would like to get back to doing, or are there any new things you would like to try?

Pacing helps with getting you some of your life back, so that you can still do things with your pain.

The Pain Management Service runs Pacing workshops for those eager to learn more about this useful strategy.

## MOOD

Chronic pain can result in you feeling a wide range of emotions from low mood, anxiety, frustration, anger and many more! We know that chronic pain is a distressing condition, so having these emotions is expected and very common.

The following strategies may help you cope better with these emotions:

- Getting back to what matters and to what is important to you
- Meditation; relaxation; mindfulness; soothing activities; self-care activities (listening to favourite music, reading, gentle walk, gentle gardening, have a bath, knitting/crochet, think about your good qualities, focus on what you can do vs you can't, mindful colouring, painting etc.)
- Engaging in meaningful activities/goals every day which give you a sense of purpose, sense of enjoyment, fun, achievement and connection/closeness.
- Being kind to yourself.

## THOUGHTS

You can practise handling your thoughts in a more helpful way, by stepping back and getting some distance/perspective from them.

For example:

**Observing** or writing down your thoughts and worries, without judging them in any particular way; or trying to change or alter them into an alternative / realistic / balanced thought

- Say to yourself: “I’m having the thought that I —”; or “My mind is generating the thought that I am —”

Do you notice any differences in how you may be feeling? Do you feel closer or further away from the thought when you say this to yourself? This is an example of getting some distance from your thoughts and taking an observers perspective to your thoughts.

**Cognitive diffusion strategies.** Examples of this method can be found on YouTube:

- Leaves on the Stream
- Mindfulness Exercises for Everyday Life
- Clouds in the Sky

**Evaluate** the helpfulness of your thoughts by asking yourself the following questions.

- Is this thought helpful or useful to me?
- Does it encourage me to do what is important to me in my life or does it hinder me?

- What are the consequences of this thought?
- Am I being hard on myself? Is my mind being a bully?
- Would I say the same to a friend?
- What kind of advice would I give to a friend in the same situation?
- What do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?

Be careful of the words you use, such as: **can’t, should, must, ought and BUT.**

Instead you may wish to use **AND.** For example: “ I’d like to do some home chores **but** I am in too much pain.” can be changed to “I am in too much pain **AND** I am going to be gentle with myself, doing one step at a time today.”

### Thoughts:

- May or may not be true
- Thoughts are not facts
- May or may not be good advice
- Are not commands
- You are not your thoughts, nor do you have to relate to them as truths, facts, commands, predictions
- Thoughts are opinions, ideas occurring in our mind
- You are more than your thoughts

## COGNITION

Chronic pain can upset concentration, attention, word-finding and memory. Lack of sleep and some medications can also affect cognition. However, by putting the pain management strategies into place, cognition may improve.

## SLEEP HYGIENE RULES

If you struggle to sleep, or have poor sleep quality, putting the following sleep rules into place can help (it takes about 3 months to notice any change).



- 1. Associations:** The thought of bed=sleep needs to be strengthened. Remove items from the bedroom that are interfering with this. e.g. television/ mobile phones/ I-Pads etc.
- 2. Sleepy Head:** Only go to bed when you feel tired. If your lifestyle permits, do not go to bed before 8pm, but always get up in the morning at the same time. Don't be tempted to lie in if you haven't slept much the night before. This will slowly begin to regulate your sleep pattern.
- 3. No clock watching:** Turn the clock away from you so if you wake up, you cannot see the time.
- 4. Get up after 20 minutes:** If you have sleepy head, go to bed, but if you don't fall asleep after 20 minutes then get up and do something until you get sleepy head again and then go back to bed (you may find some nights you are up and down a number of times, but this will start regulating your pattern of sleep).

- 5. NO Napping during the day:** (Unless you have chronic fatigue or migraines- then you can have scheduled short naps). Sleeping in the day is stealing from the night.
- 6. ROUTINE:** Establish a bed time routine to help with getting sleepy head
- 7. Other considerations:** mattress/ temperature/alcohol/ caffeine/ nicotine/ meals may contribute to sleep being affected.

## RELATIONSHIPS and COMMUNICATION

Chronic pain can affect how you communicate with others. It is always more helpful to be assertive instead of aggressive or passive, as this will help keep your pain more manageable.



Remember when people ask you how you are ...don't always say 'I'm fine' as this will not allow others to start gaining an understanding of what your chronic pain is like.

There is no need to give people lots of information about your condition, but little snippets allow them to start building on their understanding of chronic pain, and will allow them to know how to support you better.

## RELAXATION

The effects of chronic pain on your body can cause muscular, physical tension and research shows us the more tension we have the more pain that we feel. They are very closely related.

We can help this by using simple relaxation techniques that can help the physical and emotional tension that pain brings. Using diaphragmatic breathing and passive muscular relaxation we can reduce your tension levels which will help you with your pain and your mood. Therefore helping you to cope with what pain brings.

It does not require any medication, just some time and practice.

The Pain Management Service runs a Relaxation course. There are also many Relaxation Apps/YouTube sites/websites that may help you (see useful resources page)

Our service may also be able to support you with issues around your mood, thoughts, relationships and sleep. Please ask about groups and other options that focus on these components. (E.g. Pain Management Programme and Sleep management group)



We also run **Pain Management Coffee Support Mornings** throughout the year in both Colchester and Clacton, which may be of interest to you.

## MEDICATION

**Our goal when prescribing medication is:**

- To reduce the intensity of pain. However, medication will rarely eliminate, or cure your pain.
- To improve your physical function and to help you keep active.
- To improve your quality of life



We focus on a collaborative approach so we aim to ascertain the type of pain you experience. We appreciate everyone is individual and responds differently to medication.

The medication we use is evidence based, to ensure we are using it safely and that it has been proven to be clinically effective in managing chronic persistent pain

There is an emphasis on having medication reviews and to monitor your medication for its effectiveness, any side-effects and to avoid taking unnecessary medication.

The Pain Service is able to support people to learn more about their medication, by offering an Understanding Pain and Medication Group, or for those looking at reducing their opioids, there is also the Opioid Reduction Programme.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

A more comprehensive list is available – just ask us

<b>Pain Toolkit</b>	<a href="http://www.pain toolkit.org">www.pain toolkit.org</a>
<b>British Pain Society</b>	<a href="http://www.britishpainsociety.org/COVID-19-Resources/resources-for-people-living-with-pain/">www.britishpainsociety.org/COVID-19-Resources/resources-for-people-living-with-pain/</a>
<b>Pain Relief Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.painrelief foundation.org.uk">www.painrelief foundation.org.uk</a>
<b>Pain Support</b>	<a href="https://painsupport.co.uk/">https://painsupport.co.uk/</a>
<b>Chronic Pain Lifeline (CPL)</b>	Search for Chronic Pain Lifeline on Facebook
<b>Pain Concern</b>	<a href="http://www.painconcern.org.uk">www.painconcern.org.uk</a>
<b>Chronic Pain video on www.youtube.com</b>	Search for “Understanding Pain in less than 5 minutes and what to do about it!”
<b>Live well with Pain</b>	<a href="https://my.livewellwithpain.co.uk">https://my.livewellwithpain.co.uk</a>
<b>Yoga and Pilates</b>	The British Wheel of Yoga: <a href="http://www.bwy.org.uk">www.bwy.org.uk</a> NHS online Pilates: <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/pilates-for-beginners/">www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/pilates-for-beginners/</a>
<b>Weight Management, ACE Lifestyle</b>	<a href="http://www.acemyweightmatters.org">www.acemyweightmatters.org</a> Tel: 0800 022 4524

### Essex County Council for help with care or adaptations

[www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk) Click on Adult social care and health

Telephone: 0345 603 7630  
Textphone: 0345 758 5592

### Equipment

[www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)

<https://asksara.dlf.org.uk/>

<https://livingmadeeasy.org.uk/>

### Local Social Support and Activities

Colchester area Community 360  
[www.community360.org.uk](http://www.community360.org.uk)  
Tel: 01206 505250

and Tendring area CVS [www.cvstendring.org.uk](http://www.cvstendring.org.uk)  
Tel: 01255 425692

### Mindfulness apps

Iphone Search: **Mindfulness** on the App Store and on

Android/Iphone Search: **My Life (Meditation by Stop.Breathe.Think)**

[www.stopbreathethink.com](http://www.stopbreathethink.com)

### Headspace

[www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com)

### YouTube

**www.YouTube.com** Search for “Mindfulness exercises for everyday life”



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