

Pain Management: Moving from Patient to Person

At some point, most people with chronic pain are told to “learn to live with it.” Sound pain management techniques can help them learn how. The American Chronic Pain Association has been provide peer support and teaching coping skill to any with chronic pain for more than 23 years.

Pain management focuses on lessening the sense of suffering experienced by a person with pain. It blends physical, emotional, intellectual, and social skills that help the individual regain control of his or her life and enhance the quality and pleasure of that life

What is Chronic Pain?

- Pain that continues a month or more beyond the usual recovery period for an illness or injury or pain that goes on over months or years as a result of a chronic condition. It may be continuous or come and go.
- An affliction that disables, to some degree, about 86 million Americans;
- A source of frustration for the health care professionals who seek to provide care and assistance;
- A condition that affects quality of life and economic security not only of the person with pain, but also his or her family;
- A condition with high economic costs. It is estimated that US business and industry loses about \$90 billion annually to sick time, reduced productivity, and direct medical and other benefit costs due to chronic pain among employees

Coping skills are techniques that can be helpful in managing pain. Some of the suggested skills used by the American Chronic Pain Association are:

- Not dwell on physical symptoms of pain;
- Focus on abilities, not disabilities;
- Use relaxation exercises to help ease the tension that increases pain and redirect attention away from our pain and suffering;
- Understand the importance of a doctor approved exercise program;
- Identify personal priorities and set realistic goals to provide a structure to daily life and motivation;
- Realize that emotions have a direct effect on pain levels.