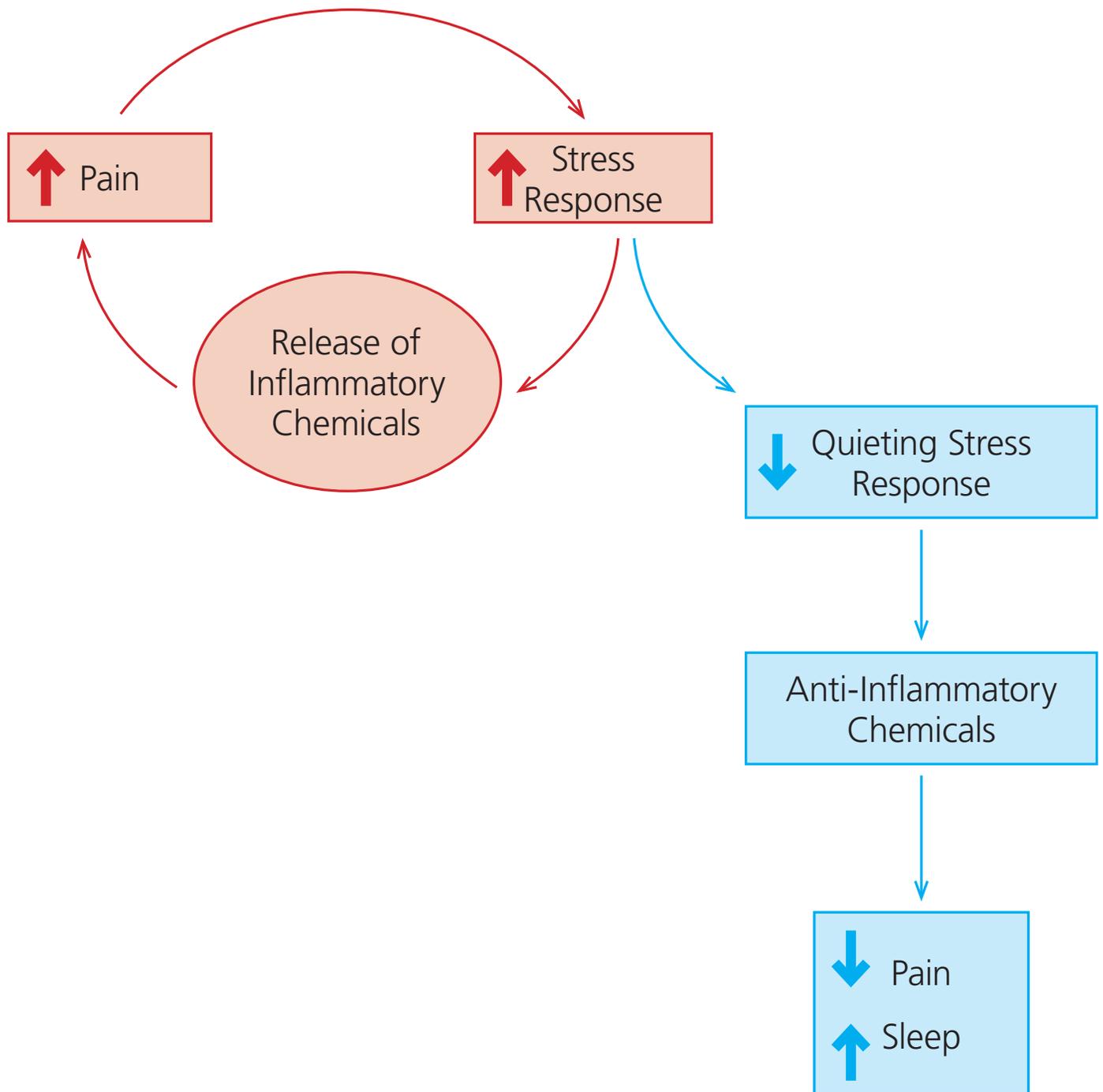


## Our stress response creates chemical changes that cause pain



- The pain response is coupled with the stress response in our brains and nervous systems. This is all part of mobilizing the Emergency Response that gets us to protect ourselves.
- The stress response is activated as part of this process. Breathing quickens, heart beats faster, digestion slows down. This is normal in an emergency, but that should stop when we get out of the emergency and know we are safe.
- In chronic stress, when that stress response doesn't shut off, we get into trouble. The stress response results in a releases of chemicals that can themselves cause pain and feelings of achiness all over the body.
- But you can actually quiet that chemical cascade, by quieting the stress response, and focusing on things in your life that make you feel good. When you do, your system releases chemicals that actually decrease pain, more powerful than any medication you can take by mouth or inject! These chemicals get released inside us when we do things that make us feel happy or connected to others, like when you play with your grandkids, pet a kitty, laugh out loud, when someone says something kind to you, and when you do something nice for others, when people support us when we're grieving. And they are released when we quiet our stress response.

And this in turn improves sleep, digestion, and pain.

Clinician: Remember to ask about this at the next session and to give positive encouragement for any gains.