

## ***Helping Oregonians with Self-Management of Chronic Pain***

According to a 2011 report from the Institute of Medicine, chronic pain affects roughly 100 million American adults and costs up to \$635 billion annually. To learn about the chronic conditions and barriers that affect Oregonians, the Oregon Pain Management Commission conducted an exploratory online survey of Oregonians in late 2011:

<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/PMC/docs/2011.Survey.pdf> As a result of this chronic pain survey, the OPMC decided to promote education about the self-management of chronic pain.

### ***What are some resources for managing chronic pain?***

The commission created this document as a collection of self-management tools and resources for individuals with chronic pain to use. To find additional information about a particular topic, simply click on the links that are embedded in this document. We hope that you will find this information both valuable and practical.

### ***What is the difference between acute and chronic pain?***

*Acute* pain is caused by a specific disease or injury. It is a warning that you have been hurt and it serves a useful purpose. For example, when you touch a hot stove, the *acute* pain that you feel causes you to immediately react by pulling your hand away. *Acute* pain will last for a limited period of time. As your injury heals, the *acute* pain that you experience will gradually decrease until it finally stops.

Treatment goals for *acute* pain include providing early interventions and adjusting the treatment so that the pain intensity can be reduced or completely eliminated.

In contrast, *chronic* pain is a disease state or syndrome. *Chronic* pain is often defined as pain lasting more than 3 months or pain that outlasts the normal time of healing that is connected with a disease or injury. *Chronic* pain may not serve a useful purpose. While *acute* pain is a normal response of your senses, in *chronic* pain the pain signals keep firing for weeks,

months, and sometimes even years. With *chronic* pain, the pain itself becomes a disease. Some chronic illnesses, such as arthritis, diabetes, cancer, and fibromyalgia may cause continuing *chronic* pain. Sometimes the cause of *chronic* pain may not be clear. Sometimes *chronic* pain has no recognizable end point.

Treatment goals for *chronic* pain are different because it may not be possible to completely eliminate or make all of the pain go away. Instead, the treatment of *chronic* pain focuses on improving function so that you can complete normal activities of daily living. The goal is to help you to live the most normal, active and functional life with the least amount of pain.

Understanding Pain:

<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/pages/pmc/understanding-pain.aspx>

American Academy of Pain Medicine videos; see videos 1-5:

<http://www.painmed.org/pain-awareness/>

Chronic Pain and Central Sensitization:

<http://www.instituteforchronicpain.org/understanding-chronic-pain/what-is-chronic-pain/central-sensitization> or <http://www.instituteforchronicpain.org>

American Academy of Pain Management:

<http://www.aapainmanage.org/aboutus/Patients.php>

### ***How does chronic pain impact an individual?***

Chronic pain impacts you with long-term changes in many—if not all—aspects of your life and can affect the overall quality of your life. Chronic pain affects your ability to work, impacts your relationships with family members, co-workers, friends and others. You may experience grief over the loss of certain abilities that may accompany chronic pain. It is common for people to experience anxiety and depression related to chronic pain.

If you experience chronic pain, you may need to learn techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, isolation and poor sleep. You may need information about appropriate exercises to help you maintain and

improve your strength, flexibility and endurance. Some other common topics of concern include: communicating effectively with family, friends, and healthcare providers; appropriate use of medications; nutrition; pacing activity and rest; and how to evaluate new treatments.

Impact of Chronic Pain on Families:

[http://www.healthtalkonline.org/Bones\\_joints/Chronic\\_Pain/Topic/1621/](http://www.healthtalkonline.org/Bones_joints/Chronic_Pain/Topic/1621/)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/13/health/13brod.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/13/health/13brod.html?_r=0)

<http://pain-topics.org/pdf/LovedOnesChronicPain.pdf> (See page 2 for handout)

American Academy of Pain Medicine videos; see video # 20:

<http://www.painmed.org/pain-awareness/>

PartnersAgainstPain: <http://partnersagainstpain.com/index.aspx>

Caregiver Cornerstones:

<http://partnersagainstpain.com/patient-resources/Caregiver%20Cornerstones%20Brochure.pdf>

PainAction: <http://www.painaction.com/>

### ***Chronic Pain, Emotions, and the Mind-Body Connection***

As previously noted, chronic pain impacts you in all aspects of your life. This includes affecting your emotions and the way that you think about and deal with your pain. When you have chronic pain, you have initial psychological distress such as fear, anxiety, and worry. These emotions and the stresses that you must deal with in your day-to-day living can actually influence or worsen your level of pain. You may become so fearful that anything you do will worsen your pain that you may guard your every action, you may lose your ability to problem solve or to focus on positive ways to address the pain. You may react to your chronic pain with frustration or anger. You may also be unable to accept your diagnosis of

chronic pain. You may react to your chronic pain with a feeling of hopelessness or helplessness.

On the other hand, if you recognize that there is a relationship between the way that you think about your chronic pain, the emotions and stresses in your daily life, and the way that you actually experience pain—the mind body connection—you may be better able to manage your symptoms. You can help self-manage your chronic pain by keeping a positive mental outlook with an optimistic attitude that your pain can get better and by seeking to lower any anxiety or depression that you may be experiencing. Be sure to use all of the support that you can get from your community—this includes support from family, friends, co-workers and your healthcare treatment team.

Mental De-conditioning, Improving Sleep, and Self-Management of Pain:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/Pages/pmc/message/2012-09.aspx>

The Mind/Body Connection and Pain Self-Management:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/pages/pmc/message/2011-12.aspx> and  
<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/pages/pmc/message/2011-10.aspx>

Meditation and Mindfulness: American Academy of Pain Medicine videos,  
See video # 18: <http://www.painmed.org/pain-awareness/>

Relaxation and Guided Imagery:  
[http://www.umm.edu/sleep/relax\\_tech.htm](http://www.umm.edu/sleep/relax_tech.htm)

Health Psychology:  
<http://www.instituteforchronicpain.org/treating-common-pain/what-is-pain-management/chronic-pain-rehabilitation/health-psychology>

Pain and Mental Health: American Academy of Pain Medicine videos; see video #5: <http://www.painmed.org/pain-awareness/>

Chronic Pain and Depression:  
<http://www.instituteforchronicpain.org/understanding-chronic-pain/complications/depression> and  
<http://www.webmd.com/depression/managing-pain>

Stress, Pain, & Yoga: <http://pain.com/library/2012/11/03-stress-pain-yoga/>

Are You Making Your Pain Worse?

<http://pain.com/library/2012/09/29-making-pain-worse/>

The Oregon Public Health Department offers a program for individuals living with a chronic disease. It is a six-week workshop that provides tools for living a healthy life with chronic health conditions. Many of the ideas presented in this program can also be used by individuals with chronic pain. For instance, the topics covered include: managing symptoms; medication “how to;” working with your health care team; setting weekly goals; effective problem solving; better communication; how to relax; handling difficult emotions; tips for eating well; and safe, easy exercise.

To learn more about the “Living Well with Chronic Conditions” program and to find out about a workshop in your community:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/diseasesconditions/chronicdisease/livingwell/Pages/Index.aspx>

Since 1980, the American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) has offered peer support and education in pain management skills to people with pain, family and friends and health care professionals.

To see the home page of the ACPA: <http://www.theacpa.org/default.aspx>

### ***Communicating Effectively to Manage Chronic Pain***

All people experience difficulty communicating with others at one time or another. However, when you have chronic pain, you may not only struggle with your pain, but also experience difficulty talking about your pain. Here are some tips to improve your communication about your pain:

- Don’t assume that others can “read your mind,” but instead communicate your concerns, needs and requests clearly and directly.
- Use an *assertive* communication style, not a *passive* or *aggressive* communication style. An assertive communication style shows consideration for your own point of view but also shows respect for the person to whom you are speaking. For example, if someone asks you to take on a task, consider the following response choices.

- *Assertive*: “I would like to help with the bake sale, but I am having too much pain to work in the kitchen right now. Can I help distribute some flyers or maybe I can assist with the next bake sale?”
- *Passive*: (Even though you do not feel capable of completing the task.) “Sure, whatever you want me to do.”
- *Aggressive*: “You know I have a lot of pain, why do you always expect me to do whatever you need?”

Assertive communication:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/assertive/SR00042>

Communication/Impact on Friends and Families:

[http://www.healthtalkonline.org/chronichealthissues/Chronic\\_Pain/Topic/16\\_24/](http://www.healthtalkonline.org/chronichealthissues/Chronic_Pain/Topic/16_24/)

When interacting with healthcare professionals, here are some ways you can communicate to get the most out of your office visit:

- Prior to your visit, jot down a relevant note that describes the problem or symptom for which you are seeking care. Keep this note brief, but provide significant, clear information. For example, if you have had a change in your chronic pain, describe where, when, and how the pain has changed.
- Prior to your visit, and any time during treatment, try to recall any events or lifestyle changes that occurred before the onset of your symptoms. Be sure to share this information.
- Prior to your visit, clarify your expectations for the visit. For example, do you need reassurance about how your pain has changed? Are you confused about your treatment course for your pain? Do you want to know if a new treatment is appropriate for you to try? Each of the above reasons will require you to direct your questions and the conversation differently at your office visit.
- Write down the questions for which you are seeking an answer. Be sure to write down your most important question first. Realistically, your provider may be able to address a list of three to five questions in one office visit.

- Bring a current list of your medications. Be sure to include any over-the-counter, herbal preparations or supplements that you are taking.
- Bring other written documentation that is appropriate such as your pain diary/journal, a log of blood sugar readings or other self-testing that you do at home, etc.

Talking with Your Doctor:

<http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/quicktips/doctalk.htm>

<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/talkingwithyourdoctor/planningyourdoctorvisit/01.html>

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/talking-your-doctor-guide-older-people>

<http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/healthcare-management/working-with-your-doctor/tips-for-talking-to-your-doctor.html>

[http://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/communicating\\_with\\_your\\_doctor/index.html](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/communicating_with_your_doctor/index.html)

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/2012/12/how-to-talk-to-your-doctor/index.htm>

<http://www.theschwartzcenter.org/ViewPage.aspx?pageId=102>

### ***Pacing Activities and Rest to Manage Chronic Pain***

When you have chronic pain, it can be hard to strike a balance between doing things and getting appropriate rest. Sometimes when an individual has a painful sensation, they worry about the cause of the pain and its future consequences. The individual may avoid movement and activities (such as work, hobbies, etc.) due to fear of making the pain worse. This *disuse* of muscles and reduction in activity can create physical de-conditioning. It can also cause a reliance on inappropriate muscles to create movements or postures which may possibly add to the chronic pain.

There are some people who—instead of listening to their bodies—force themselves to finish a chore or job no matter what the consequences. They “push through the pain” to accomplish a planned list of activities—regardless of the effect that this over-exertion may have upon their body. Sometimes these people end up in a vicious cycle—they feel better, push themselves too

much, have more pain, and then collapse. Once they start feeling better, they may start the cycle all over again.

There is a better way to approach activities of daily living if you are living with chronic pain. This is by using the technique known as pacing. With pacing, you learn how to balance both your activities and rest in a way that will allow you to complete tasks on a daily basis without pushing your pain out of control.

#### Pacing Activities and Rest:

<http://www.psychologytools.org/assets/files/Worksheets/Pacing.pdf>

[http://www.cuh.org.uk/resources/pdf/patient\\_information\\_leaflets/PIN1328\\_back\\_pain\\_management\\_programme\\_pacing.pdf](http://www.cuh.org.uk/resources/pdf/patient_information_leaflets/PIN1328_back_pain_management_programme_pacing.pdf)

[http://www.healthtalkonline.org/disability/Chronic\\_Pain/Topic/1381/](http://www.healthtalkonline.org/disability/Chronic_Pain/Topic/1381/)

<http://www.medschoolforyou.com/Programs/ChronicPainSelfMan/Pacing.pdf>

#### Pain Diaries:

<http://www.partnersagainstpain.com/printouts/A7012PD3.pdf>

[http://www.livingcbt.com/forms/pain\\_diary.pdf](http://www.livingcbt.com/forms/pain_diary.pdf)

### ***Exercise and Chronic Pain***

As noted previously, it is common for people with chronic pain to avoid exercise. This may be either because they are afraid that exercise may damage them or they are afraid of experiencing more pain with exercise. The less physical activity that an individual participates in, the more out of condition the individual's muscles become and the less the individual is able to do. Physical de-conditioning can actually make your chronic pain worse because your tissues, muscles, and bones are weakening due to lack of use. As previously mentioned, you may rely on inappropriate muscles to create movement or postures which may add to your chronic pain.

There are different types of exercise that you can do. One of the best ways to begin exercising is to start with gentle stretching exercise to increase your *flexibility*. You can use *strengthening* exercise to maintain your weight, keep your bones and muscles strong and keep your joints lubricated. *Strength*

*training* should occur at least two times per week. *Aerobic exercise* is an activity that increases your heart rate for a period of time; usually it is recommended that you perform aerobic exercise for at least 20 minutes at a time. You may not be able to participate in all kinds of aerobic activity, but you probably can find something that you like to do and may have better success with aerobic exercise once you have started strengthening and flexibility exercises.

Aquatic or pool therapy is a form of exercise that is often recommended for individuals with chronic pain. This is because exercise performed in water is low impact and, while water takes pressure off of bones, joints, and muscles, it also offers natural resistance to make your muscles stronger. When standing in water that comes up to your chest, you only have to bear about 20% of your weight. You can begin by walking in water that comes up to your waist and progress to other types of exercises in the water.

#### Tips for exercising:

- Check with your healthcare provider before starting an exercise routine.
- If you are reluctant to exercise because you feel “too tired,” remind yourself that you may feel sluggish from lack of movement. It can be a vicious cycle; you feel tired, you move less, and you feel even more tired and are more reluctant to participate in activities. Remind yourself that appropriate exercise may help you sleep better, feel more rested and feel physically better in general.
- If you lack motivation to exercise by yourself or desire conversation with someone to help you relax, combine the two and invite a friend or neighbor to exercise with you or consider joining a group of individuals exercising.
- If you are afraid you won’t stick with an exercise routine, make it a priority and build it into your calendar. Even if you only plan to start out by walking for 10 to 15 minutes, write this prominently on your calendar. Then cross it off as an accomplishment once you complete this goal each day.
- If you are experiencing depression with your chronic pain, remind yourself that physical activity is good for mental health. Exercise

reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety, can boost your self-esteem and can make you feel as if you are taking some control over the pain in your life.

Exercise: National Osteoporosis Foundation:

<http://www.nof.org/articles/543>

Exercise: National Fibromyalgia Association:

[http://www.fmaware.org/PageServerf1ba.html?pagename=topics\\_exercise](http://www.fmaware.org/PageServerf1ba.html?pagename=topics_exercise)

Exercise: Arthritis Foundation: <http://www.arthritis.org/search/?q=exercise>

Chronic Pain and Exercise:

[http://pain.about.com/od/exercisehealthylifestyle/f/exercise\\_cp.htm](http://pain.about.com/od/exercisehealthylifestyle/f/exercise_cp.htm)

Tips for Living with Chronic Pain:

<http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/guide/11-tips-for-living-with-chronic-pain>

Aquatic Exercise: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/aquatic-exercise/SM00055>

### ***Using Medications Appropriately to Manage Chronic Pain***

Tips for Using Pain Medications Safely:

- When discussing treatment options, inform your healthcare provider if you or someone in your family has a history of mental illness or substance abuse.
- Keep your healthcare provider updated with a list of all of your current medications. (Be sure to include over-the-counter medications, herbal preparations and or supplements.)
- Inform your healthcare provider about any allergic or undesirable reaction you have had to a medication. (Make sure that this information is included in your medical records.)
- Become familiar with your medications. Be aware of the names and doses of your medications, how often and how to take them, what you are taking them for and any potential side effects.

- If you don't understand how to take your medication or have other questions about it, be sure to ask your healthcare provider for the answers that you need.
- When you pick up your prescription from the store, check to be sure you are receiving the right medication at the right dose and in the right form (for example: a pill, liquid or etc.). Keep your medications in the container in which they came.
- Take each medication exactly as instructed. Do not crush, break, or chew pills unless directed to do so.
- If taking a liquid medication, use the measuring implement that came with it or measure it exactly as instructed.
- When possible, use only one pharmacy for all of your medications. This is particularly important if you are taking opioid medications.
- Do not mix your opioid pain medications with alcohol, antihistamines, barbiturates or benzodiazepines. This combination can slow your breathing rate and become life- threatening. Check with your healthcare provider if you are uncertain if you are taking any of the above medications or if you are uncertain about drug combinations.
- Be careful when first taking a new pain medication to observe how the medication affects you; do not drive or use heavy machinery until your healthcare provider advises it is OK.
- Never take a medication that has been prescribed for someone else. Never randomly change the dose or time schedule of your medication without first checking with your healthcare provider. Never share your medication with someone else.
- Store all medications in a dry, cool place that cannot be accessed by children, pets, or individuals who might take your medications. It is preferable to store medications in a locked area or container for safety.
- Prescription Drug Disposal:  
<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm>
- Use a pain diary to record your pain and to record how your medication and other treatments are working to reduce your pain.  
Pain Diaries:

<http://www.partnersagainstpain.com/printouts/A7012PD3.pdf>

[http://www.livingcbt.com/forms/pain\\_diary.pdf](http://www.livingcbt.com/forms/pain_diary.pdf)

- Be aware of your responsibilities in relation to using pain medications, particularly opioid prescriptions.  
<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/pages/pmc/message/2011-04.aspx>  
<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPR/Pages/pmc/message/2012-04.aspx>
- Oregon's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program:  
<http://www.orpdmp.com/faq.html>

American Academy of Pain Medicine video; see videos 6-14:

<http://www.painmed.org/pain-awareness/>

Since 1980, the American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) has offered peer support and education in pain management skills to people with pain, family and friends and health care professionals.

To see the home page of the ACPA:

<http://www.theacpa.org/default.aspx> You can then click on "Medications and Treatments."

### ***Your Pain Management Team***

The Oregon Pain Management Commission and many pain experts believe that the majority of pain care should occur at the community level in the medical home where you see your primary care provider (PCP). Although your PCP will coordinate your pain care, the PCP may work with a variety of healthcare professionals. When appropriate, your PCP may also refer you to a pain specialist or pain clinic if the PCP believes that this additional expertise will help in treating your chronic pain. Following is a list of the other types of healthcare professionals and the types of expertise that they may provide in helping you manage your chronic pain. Ask your PCP if any of the following treatments are appropriate for you. Many insurance companies will reimburse for the care provided by these healthcare team members.

Oregon's Community Health Centers (Federally Qualified Health Care Centers—FQHCs):

<http://www.orpca.org/learn-about-opca/oregons-community-health-centers>

Oregon Primary Care Association:

<http://www.orpca.org/learn-about-opca/about-opca>

### ***Behavioral Medicine Specialists and Chronic Pain Management***

Psychologists, Psychiatrists, professionals with a degree in Masters of Social Work (MSW), and other mental health therapists may be important and effective members of the pain management treatment team. These Behavioral Medicine Specialists address the psychological (mental and emotional) aspects of pain and the disorders that contribute to chronic pain. These specialists may use broad one-on-one interviews and interactions to help you tackle symptoms that often accompany chronic pain. This includes depression, anxiety and grief over the loss of a life without pain. They can also help you with issues that can complicate the evaluation and treatment of chronic pain. This includes topics such as possible co-occurring mental health problems and potential addictions.

Behavioral Medicine Specialists may help you develop a “flare-up” management plan with self-management tools to deal with your chronic pain. They may teach you stress management techniques such as deep breathing, self-hypnosis, and biofeedback. They may also help you accept your pain with a change in behaviors for a more positive focus on living productively with your chronic pain.

American Academy of Pain Medicine videos; see video #5:

<http://www.painmed.org/pain-awareness/>

Oregon Psychological Association:

<http://www.opa.org/>

Oregon Psychiatric Association:

<http://www.orpsych.org/index.asp>

(Oregon) National Association of Social Workers:

<http://nasworegon.org/about-us/frequently-asked-questions/>

The Relationship between Physical and Psychological Health:  
[http://www.med.upenn.edu/psychotherapy/newsletter\\_pain.html](http://www.med.upenn.edu/psychotherapy/newsletter_pain.html)

Depression and Chronic Pain:  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression-and-chronic-pain/depression-and-chronic-p.pdf>

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:  
<http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/features/cognitive-behavioral>

### ***Nurses and Chronic Pain Management***

Nurses are the member of your multidisciplinary team with whom you may spend the most time. Nurses can help you by explaining the side-effects of medicines or treatments used to address your chronic pain. Nurses may actually have more time than your PCP to discuss the ways you can self-manage your chronic pain and to answer some of your questions about your condition.

Nurses can work with you to help manage other medical conditions you have that may impact your pain, sleep, diet and nutrition. They may also be able to answer you questions about using non-drug interventions, such as the use of ice, heat, distraction, music and imagery in coping with chronic pain.

Some Nurse Practitioners may also serve as your Primary Care Provider. These Nurse Practitioners and some Clinical Nurse Specialists are able to evaluate and treat your pain. They may also be able to treat pain and prescribe all pain medicines including Controlled Substances.

American Nurses Association: What Nurses Do:  
<http://nursingworld.org/EspeciallyForYou/What-is-Nursing/Tools-You-Need/RNsAPNs.html>

Nurse Practitioners of Oregon:  
<http://www.nursepractitionersoregon.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4>

### ***Naturopathic Physicians and Chronic Pain Management***

Naturopathic Physicians address chronic pain with a holistic orientation—that is, they address all aspects of your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Naturopathic medicine suggests that there is a natural healing power in the body that when activated establishes, maintains and restores health.

Naturopathic Physicians use a variety of nutritional, plant-based, and physical approaches to improve your overall health and to treat the source of your chronic pain. Naturopathic Physicians will address your chronic pain through a goal of supporting and optimizing the body's natural healing ability by using lifestyle counseling, recommending dietary supplements and medicinal plants and possibly with the use of rehabilitative exercise, injection therapy and physical medicine.

Some Naturopathic Physicians may serve as a Primary Care Provider (PCP) to address all of your healthcare needs, as well as treating your chronic pain. You may want to check with your insurance plan to confirm that your Naturopathic Physician can also serve as your PCP.

Definition of Naturopathic Medicine:

<http://www.naturopathic.org/content.asp?contentid=59>

Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians:

<http://www.oanp.org/>

### ***Chiropractic Physicians and Chronic Pain Management***

Chiropractic Physicians evaluate patients and make a diagnosis with information determined during a physical examination. Chiropractic Physicians may order lab tests and radiological studies and use specialized methods to identify the causes and lifestyle factors that may contribute to problems with the spine, poor health and chronic pain. They may treat you with spinal adjustments to mobilize your muscles and skeleton to aid in reducing your chronic pain and to improve your ability to function and participate in everyday activities of living.

Chiropractic Physicians may also treat you with nutritional supplements and herbs and/or alternative drug therapies that assist your body's natural ability to relieve pain, restore health, prevent disease and address your chronic pain. Chiropractic Physicians may address your chronic pain with curative and postural exercises, mind/body techniques, biofeedback and relaxation training, etc. Oregon law permits Chiropractic Physicians to write orders to send you to a Physical Therapist or to a medical specialist.

Oregon Chiropractic Association:

<http://oregonchiroassoc.com/>

Chiropractic Care for Pain:

<http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/guide/chiropractic-pain-relief>

### ***Physical Therapists and Chronic Pain Management***

Physical Therapists apply the latest research to help people get back in motion. Physical Therapists are the healthcare experts who will examine your muscles and skeleton and the nerves related to your muscles and movement and how they are impacted by your chronic pain.

Physical Therapists can teach you about how to avoid pain and disability and how to proceed in your activities of daily living if you are living with chronic pain. They can teach you habits of good posture and body mechanics (the way you use your body in activities), safe exercise routines and healthy activity choices. They can also work with you on your coordination and balance training. They can teach you strengthening and flexibility exercises to help you develop an independent and more active life in which you can be more self-sufficient, even while living with chronic pain.

Oregon Physical Therapy Association:

<http://www.opta.org/>

When Physical Therapy Can Help:

<http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/tc/physical-therapy-when-physical-therapy-can-help>

## ***Occupational Therapists and Chronic Pain Management***

Occupational Therapists work with people with chronic pain to help them learn to manage the physical and psychological effects of chronic pain. They teach you how to lead a more active and productive life while living with chronic pain. Occupational Therapists will use helpful activities to assist your brain to reorganize itself by creating new nerve connections. They train your brain by using healing activities to improve your reasoning, recognition and insight abilities.

Occupational Therapists will help you identify specific activities or behaviors that aggravate your pain. They will assess the environment in which you live, work and play and then teach you methods to perform your activities of daily living in a way that decreases the frequency and extent of painful episodes. They will help you identify life factors that can be changed and help you develop a plan to decrease the harmful effects of such factors. (For example, they can teach you how to change your sleeping arrangements to improve rest so that your sleep is less negatively affected by your chronic pain and so that your chronic pain is less impacted by poor sleep.) They help you get your focus off of the pain and back to “living life fully.”

Occupational Therapists help you break tasks down so that you can understand a number of different ways to accomplish your activities associated with daily living and work. They can also teach you how to use adaptive equipment to decrease pain while you are participating in every day activities such as dressing, cooking, performing household chores, performing tasks connected with your occupation, etc.

Occupational Therapy Association for Oregon:

<http://otao.affiniscape.com/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=2>

The American Occupational Therapy Association:

<http://www.aota.org/Consumers.aspx>

What an Occupational Therapist Does:

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm#tab-2>

## ***Clinical Exercise Physiologists and Chronic Pain Management***

Clinical Exercise Physiologists are trained healthcare providers who are specifically trained in exercise science to help you improve your strength and physical performance while you are living with chronic pain.

Clinical Exercise Physiologists may work in a clinic or a non-clinic setting. Often they work in programs that focus on individuals who are recuperating from the effects of chronic diseases such as heart and lung problems, osteoporosis, diabetes, pain and a variety of other health problems. Clinical Exercise Physiologists can evaluate you and teach you about how to use exercise, training and rehabilitation to improve your chronic pain. They will also teach you to manage your lifestyle in order to improve the quality of your life while you live with chronic pain.

What A Clinical Exercise Physiologist Does:

[http://www.acsm-cepa.org/files/public/CEP-Consumer\\_Information.pdf](http://www.acsm-cepa.org/files/public/CEP-Consumer_Information.pdf)

Clinical Exercise Physiology Association:

<http://www.acsm-cepa.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>

## ***The Community Pharmacist and Chronic Pain Management***

As noted previously in this document, whenever possible, you should use only one pharmacy for all of your medications. This is particularly important if you are taking opioid medications. Your community Pharmacist will be better able to help you manage your chronic pain if the Pharmacist has a summary of all of the medications that you are currently taking.

Your Pharmacist can provide a great deal of information about your medications. The Pharmacist can help you understand the side effects that commonly occur from certain kinds of medications and possibly how to treat these symptoms or prevent them from occurring. For example, opioid medications tend to cause problems with constipation; your Pharmacist can discuss actions you can take to avoid this side effect.

If your medication is one that needs to be slowly increased or slowly decreased, your Pharmacist can help you manage your dosing schedule. The

Pharmacist can be watchful for medications that should not be taken together; this is particularly true if you have more than one healthcare provider writing prescriptions for you. The Pharmacist can be on the lookout for medications that are known to increase pain or that have more risks than benefits and can discuss this information with you and your prescribing provider. Finally, the Pharmacist can watch for inconsistencies that might occur with a prescription order and communicate with the prescribing provider to assure that the medication you are receiving will achieve the outcome that was intended.

What Pharmacists Do:

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Pharmacists.htm#tab-2>

National Patient Safety Foundation:

<http://www.npsf.org/for-patients-consumers/tools-and-resources-for-patients-and-consumers/pharmacy-safety-consumer-fact-sheet/>

National Community Pharmacists Association:

<http://www.cecity.com/ncpa/mtm/disclaim.htm>

Promotions End for Consumers who Transfer Prescriptions:

[http://www.oregonlive.com/window-shop/index.ssf/2012/07/promotions\\_end\\_for\\_consumers\\_w.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/window-shop/index.ssf/2012/07/promotions_end_for_consumers_w.html)

### ***Acupuncturists and Chronic Pain Management***

There are many different styles and approaches that fall under the treatment known as acupuncture. Examples of different styles include Chinese Acupuncture, Japanese Acupuncture and Korean Acupuncture. Acupuncturists strive to promote, maintain, and restore health and prevent illness. Traditional Oriental Medicine views health as a state of balance. Acupuncturists attempt to address illness and chronic pain by addressing imbalances in the body.

Acupuncturists evaluate individuals with chronic pain and then attempt to correct body imbalances with a variety of techniques. Treatment may include the use of needles, moxibustion (moxa is a cone or cylinder of downy or wooly material that comes from various plants and moxibustion is

burning of moxa during treatment), blood moving approaches with the application of suction cups to the body, massage, etc.

Under Oregon law, the practice of acupuncture also includes traditional and modern techniques of Oriental diagnosis and evaluation, Oriental massage, exercise and related therapeutic methods, use of Oriental herbs, vitamins, minerals, and dietary advice. You may want to check with your insurance plan to confirm that acupuncture is a paid benefit with your healthcare coverage.

Acupuncture Overview:

<http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/acupuncture-000345.htm>

Oregon Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine:

<http://www.oaaom.com/>

American Academy of Medical Acupuncture:

[http://www.medicalacupuncture.org/acu\\_info/articles/aboutacupuncture.html](http://www.medicalacupuncture.org/acu_info/articles/aboutacupuncture.html)

National Institutes of Health National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine: <http://nccam.nih.gov/>

### ***Massage Therapists and Chronic Pain Management***

Licensed Massage Therapists are trained in soft-tissue manipulation for healing purposes. Myofascial (related to the connective tissue surrounding and linked with muscles) trigger point massage and other techniques have been shown to be effective for pain reduction in certain conditions.

Licensed Massage Therapists can relieve both direct and referred pain by relaxing muscles, easing soft tissue compression to relieve entrapped nerves and to reduce nerve and muscle tension. All of this can reduce pain perception.

Licensed Massage Therapists can also provide relaxation massage which uses aromatherapy (the use of fragrant essential oils), music therapy and soothing techniques while manipulating soft tissue. Relaxation massage may help restore mind-body balance and activate the body's relaxation

response which can reduce the perception of pain. You may want to check with your insurance plan to confirm that massage is a paid benefit with your healthcare coverage.

Massage Therapy:

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/massage/massageintroduction.htm>

<http://www.webmd.com/balance/massage-therapy-styles-and-health-benefits>

Oregon Massage Therapists Licensing Requirements:

<http://www.oregon.gov/obmt/pages/licensing2.aspx>

### ***Staying Informed & Evaluating Information for Ongoing Self-Management of Chronic Pain***

Throughout your journey of living with chronic pain, you will want to stay informed in order to self-manage your pain. Remember that your Primary Care Provider and all of the other healthcare providers on your treatment team are the best sources for asking questions and directions to obtain information to assist you. There are a variety of books about chronic pain and self-management of pain that have been written by trustworthy doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers. You may be able to locate these books at your local library or purchase them from a bookstore or online.

Many people will use an internet search engine to locate information online at the World Wide Web. The internet can be a very useful source of information—as you have probably already found out by using the web links in this document. However, there are some things to keep in mind when using the internet. To be sure that you are viewing truthful and realistic information, keep the following tips in mind:

- Look at the URL, which is the web address after the name of the web site. The most reliable sites end with “.gov” (which stands for government agencies), “.edu” (which stands for educational institutions or academic medical centers) or “.org” (which stands for organization and will include many nonprofit groups such as the National Fibromyalgia Association, etc.).

- When looking at “.org” web sites, check to see if the organization is a nonprofit or national association and if the main purpose of the site is to provide you with information. If there are numerous advertisements about products available for purchase or if the content of the web site seems mainly aimed at “pitching” or selling products or services, you will want to use caution in evaluating the information provided.
- Many web sites will include a topic titled “About Us.” If you click on this link, you will be able to learn more about the mission of the individuals behind the web site. You can also learn things like who the sponsor of the web site is and who is helping to finance any activities connected with the web site. This will give your more information to determine whether this is a credible source of facts.
- To determine if a web site is providing up-to-date information, you can check for the dates on which information was posted. This often appears at the bottom of each page or dates may appear within documents posted on the web site. If you can’t find any dates on a web site, you may want to proceed with caution as the information supplied could be outdated and therefore no longer accurate or appropriate. Lack of dates might also indicate that work placed on the web site has been done in a casual and untrustworthy manner.
- Always be aware that a web site may provide information that is not appropriate for your individual circumstances or the information provided may be too little, which may be more dangerous than no information at all.
- No matter how attractive a web site appears or regardless if a number of people you trust have recommended the website, you will want to keep your healthcare provider informed about any changes you are considering making that could affect your health and your chronic pain.

Medical Library Association:  
<http://www.mlanet.org/resources/userguide.html>

UCSF Evaluating Health Information:

[http://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/evaluating\\_health\\_information/index.html](http://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/evaluating_health_information/index.html)

Evaluating Web-Based Health Resources:

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/webresources>

MEDLINE: <http://medlineplus.gov>