

Tips to manage chronic pain

- ✓ **Use relaxation and deep breathing strategies to calm your mind and body.** Many phone apps and online videos can guide you through progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, or meditation.
- ✓ **Move.** Regular physical activity helps with muscle aches, pain, and depression. Pace yourself and listen to your body.
- ✓ **Distract yourself.** Focusing on the pain can make it feel worse. Do something fun to get your mind off the pain.
- ✓ **Use heat or ice.** Take a warm shower or bath. Try a heating pad for 20 minutes per day. Ice packs or cold showers can help.
- ✓ **Consider alternative therapies.** Try chiropractic care, acupuncture, or osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT).
- ✓ **Try physical therapy.** Stretches and strengthening exercises can be helpful.
- ✓ **Consider therapy.** Counseling can help you learn strategies to manage pain and get back to enjoying life again.



MY GOAL FOR THIS WEEK

Chronic pain doesn't have to define you or rule your life.

Take back your life by working on your goals and trying different approaches to manage your pain!



Managing Chronic Pain



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CHANGE that *MATTERS*

Promoting Healthy Behaviors

My plan to manage chronic pain

Chronic pain can affect all parts of your life — work, hobbies, relationships, and mood.

When your pain is bad, your instinct is to shut down and avoid activities that hurt. However, in the long run, being inactive makes the pain worse.

Sometimes chronic pain feels overwhelming and seems to take over your life. Maybe you feel like it has robbed you of meaningful activities.



What does pain keep you from doing?

Although pain may always be part of your life, it shouldn't define you! Are you ready to broaden your life and put pain in its proper place?



-1-

Take action to broaden your life and put pain in its place. Reflect on what is really important to you. Here are some things people value in life.

- Intimate relationships (spouse or partner)
- Parenting
- Family (other than marriage or parenting)
- Friends / Social life
- Work / Career
- Education / Training
- Recreation / Fun
- Citizenship / Community Life
- Spirituality
- Health

-2-

Create two lists. If the above list is missing something you value, add it below.

MY VALUES	BEHAVIORS
Rank the 10 values in order — from most important to least important in your life.	Rank the 10 values by how you spend your time — from spending most to the least amount of time.
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.

-3-

Now review the two lists. What do you notice? How are the lists similar? Different?

Set a goal. Perhaps you noticed that you don't spend a lot of time on a value that is important to you. **Which life domain do you want to invest more time and energy in?**

What specifically do you want to do?

When will you do it (day, time)?

What might get in the way?

Who can help you work on this goal?

