

KNOWLEDGE IS Power!



Research shows that when we understand how our body is working, it is easier for us to cope with our health experiences. It also shows that when families, friends and siblings understand pain, it helps them learn how to better support the person in pain.

HOW DOES Pain Work?

The nervous system is the body's communication center. It utilizes a 2-way highway that has 3 main jobs:

Nerves gather and send messages about what is going on.

The brain receives the messages and decides how to respond to the messages. It sends orders to the body in response to the messages.



The spinal cord acts like a gateway between the nerves and the brain – it can be controlled by the brain to gather more information or stop messages before they get to the brain.

ACUTE Pain: This is pain you experience when your brain determines that your body is hurt or could get hurt. Your brain protects you with ACUTE pain.



EG: if you break your leg, your brain uses pain to tell you not to use it. When your body heals- the brain stops sending pain signals because the body is no longer hurt.

CHRONIC Pain: This is pain you experience even when your body is not hurt because of changes to your nervous system. Chronic pain lasts for months and impacts many different parts of your life. Your brain OVER protects you with CHRONIC pain.



EG: chronic pain like a song that is stuck in your head even though the music has stopped. It is something that your brain and nerves create even though you are safe.

NEUROPLASTICITY: The ability of the brain and nervous system to adapt and change.

The bad news: Chronic pain is an example of the neuroplasticity that isn't helpful for us.

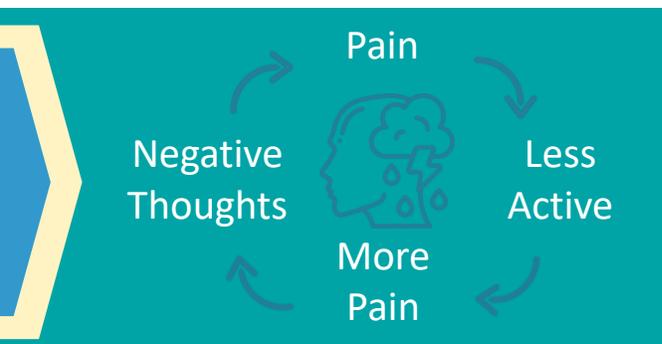
- ✓ The brain and nerves become more sensitive and overactive.
- ✓ The brain to release messages that “turn up the volume” on your pain.
- ✓ Pain can be felt during activities that should not normally cause pain.
- ✓ Even our thoughts can trigger pain when our nervous system is so sensitive.

The great news: Pain treatment uses neuroplasticity to help change the way the nervous system responds.

- ✓ Treatment helps to change the way the brain interprets messages.
- ✓ The brain can become less over-protective.
- ✓ We can train ourselves to “turn down the volume” of your pain.

CYCLE OF PAIN

The experience of chronic pain is often described in a cycle that gets worse over time.



Goals of Treatment: break the cycle

1. Reducing your pain.
2. Improving function so you can get back to activities you need to do and love.
3. Learning ways to manage and keep your pain under control.

LEARN MORE

Solutions for Kids in Pain (SKIP) - www.kidsinpain.ca

MyCarePath - www.mycarepath.ca

To learn how pain develops, how it is assessed, and how it can be treated - www.aboutkidshealth.ca/pain

PainBytes - www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/painbytes

Ontario
Chronic Pain
Network