

Prescribing Activity as a Pain Treatment

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Land Acknowledgement

I am speaking to you from the traditional land of the syilx, Okanagan Nation, and to those of you in Alberta who share the land with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples whose resilience and presence remind us of Treaty obligations and relationships, including treaty territories 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 which include a diverse array of culturally distinct Indigenous peoples whose histories, language and cultures continue to enhance our communities and remind us of our ongoing relationships with each other, the land, and our processes of reconciliation.

It is always an honour for me to sit with elders who can share traditions and practices of pain care that served us well, and long, before the development of what we refer to as western medicine.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe ways to empower patients with chronic pain to increase activity safely using evidence-based practice
 2. Write an exercise prescription specific to patients with chronic pain
 3. Identify healthcare providers who can assist with supporting rehabilitation in patients with chronic pain
 4. Describe practical ways to stay active at home when physical distancing is required
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Disclosures

In addition to my role as faculty at UBC, I am the owner of my own business, develop and teach CE courses, and sell products related to pain care. I will not discuss any of this business during this talk.

I am currently consulting to a private rehabilitation company, and will not discuss this work or business during this talk.

Definitions

Prescribed

- expert guided
- not necessarily with all the precision and detail of pharm prescriptions

Activity

- individual exercises
 - individual or group with a teacher
 - normal daily activities
 - recreational activities
 - social activities
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Definitions

Pain

- pain that is persisting, not resolving as pain usually does

Treatment

- intention to directly influence pain itself
 - intention to impact/counteract changes associated with persisting pain
 - intention to assist the individual in coping, accepting, and living in pain
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Benefits of being active related to persisting pain

- General health and well-being
 - For hypoalgesic effects; open the medicine cabinet
 - To desensitize
 - To restore interoceptive awareness
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Benefits of being active related to persisting pain

- To regain confidence and sense of competence
 - To decrease sense of fragility and fear of injury
 - To increase social engagement
 - Stress management and restorative sleep
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Goals of prescribed activity (simplified)

- To take a break or find some respite from the pain
 - To regulate physiology and mind; to calm; to balance
 - To challenge one's abilities
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When should activity prescription begin?

As soon as we identify
that this person is not going to follow
the usual trajectory of recovery



Traumatic Injuries Distress Scale

www.pirlresearch.com

12 questions for 85% prediction rate of who will have delayed recovery
- whiplash associated disorder

Two (2) factors of key importance

Uncontrollable pain

Negative affect

Important factors in activity/exercise prescription

- Meaningful
 - The patient will do this activity
 - Align with patient's goals
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Important factors in activity/exercise prescription

- Align with patient beliefs about their pain and their recovery
 - Alliance
 - Co-regulation
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Options, when painful movement is the problem?

- Provide treatments that decrease pain or improve ease of movements
 - “This is to help you move with more ease.”
 - Provide compassionate reassurance and pain education
 - Use imagery
 - Teach mindfulness
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Options, when painful movement is the problem?

- Listen to multiple alarms as guide for how hard to push
- Use the provoke-recover approach like in concussion rehab
- Start low and go slow, and other activity pacing techniques



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Virtual Care

Provides an implicit message that self-care is vital to pain care.

Language is important – this is “expert-guided self care”

- this is not all up to the patient

**Being isolated doesn't have to equal feeling isolated,
virtual care can create connection.**

Access this open access series to explore most of these options

Pain BC gentle movement@home series

- <https://www.painbc.ca/gentle-movement-at-home>

37 gentle movement classes

< 45 min each

Free access

Comments?
More answers?
Questions?

Thank you to the Primary Care Network
and to you for your heart of service to people living in pain
