

The background features a central vertical line. To the left of this line, there are several colorful rays (purple, orange, and yellow) radiating outwards. To the right, there are clusters of colored dots in blue, green, and orange, also radiating from the center.

2020 GLOBAL YEAR FOR THE PREVENTION OF PAIN



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Preventing Pain: An Introduction

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- Pain is defined as “*An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage.*”(IASP)
- Chronic pain is typically defined as pain that continues to be present for greater than 3 months, or lasts longer than the expected normal duration of recovery (Treede et al., Pain, 2019).
- Monitoring an individual’s pain that does not improve within 3 months is important given that early treatment of pain is the best way to prevent long-term, persistent chronic pain (Friction et al., 2017).
- An estimated 1 in 5 people globally experience chronic pain (Goldberg et al., 2011).
- In the United States, 50 million people experience chronic daily pain with 19.6 million experiencing high-impact chronic pain (ie, chronic pain that frequently limits life or work activities) (Dalhamer et al., 2018).

The most common types of chronic pain include:

- musculoskeletal pain (eg, chronic low back pain, neck pain, arthritis pain)
- neuropathic pain (eg, peripheral neuropathy, trigeminal neuralgia)
- functional pain syndromes (eg, fibromyalgia, chronic migraine, chronic pelvic pain)
- complex regional pain syndrome
- cancer pain



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How to Reduce the Chance of Developing Chronic Pain – General Health Guidelines

Maintaining a healthful lifestyle is a strong intervention to prevent chronic pain (van Hecke et al., 2013).

- Maintain a healthful diet and weight
- Exercise regularly
- Eliminate unhealthy practices such as excessive alcohol use and smoking
- Work and rest in a variety of healthy postures
- Manage stress with deep breaths using the diaphragm muscles (Ma et al., 2017), participating in enjoyable activities, reducing sources of unnecessary stress whenever possible
- Seek counsel or psychological/behavioral therapy whenever needed (Pegram et al., 2017)



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How to Manage Acute Pain and Prevent Transition to Chronic Pain *Primary Prevention*

- Patients and doctors need to discuss a plan for pain management for short term pre surgery or post injury.
- Doctors need to take an individualized patient-centered approach and focus on multimodal treatment to prevent the transition to chronic pain (Fricton et al., 2015).
- As recommended by the recent Pain Management Best Practices Inter-agency Task Force Report(1) it is advisable to:
 - Take anti-inflammatory medications (for example, ibuprofen)
 - Apply cold and/or heat to the affected areas
 - Participate in therapeutic (mild to moderate) exercise
 - Physical therapy (or physiotherapy), massage therapy^[KMP3]
 - Manage stress
 - Obtain psychological support
- Additionally, it may be advisable to:
 - Take a short, tapered dose of oral steroids to reduce inflammation (Goldberg et al., JAMA, 2015)
 - Eat a low-inflammatory diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts, lean protein sources



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How to Manage and Prevent Worsening of Chronic Pain *Secondary Prevention & Maintenance*

- Understand that chronic pain is common and often difficult to completely cure – good self-management of chronic pain is often the best form of treatment to get pain to a tolerable level for an individual.
- Positive, yet realistic, expectations for treatments or therapies can be more helpful than extreme or negative expectations.
- Whenever possible find a doctor and supportive individuals that you trust and feel comfortable with sharing your experiences.
- Multimodal and interdisciplinary treatments that use a variety of pharmacologic, physical, lifestyle, psychological, and alternative and complementary therapies are thought of as the gold standard and most effective way to manage and reduce chronic pain and its impact (Cuomo et al., J Pain Res., 2019).
 - Seek medical advice from a pain specialist / pain clinic if one is available in your area
 - Continue regular mild to moderate exercise - keep moving your body and, when possible, the painful area
 - Begin physical therapy (or physiotherapy), ideally from a pain specialist
 - Receive psychological support, ideally from a specialty trained pain psychologist
 - Try complementary therapies: meditation, yoga, acupuncture, biofeedback, massage therapy