

Managing Chronic Back and Neck Pain

Regardless of which treatments you are undergoing, it can always be helpful to understand your health condition before you start a self-conditioning program. If you are currently under treatment, the following information can act as an adjunct -- or as a primary means -- to help manage your back or neck condition. People often report that such techniques are very helpful in reducing pain.

Of course, the first step in coping with back pain or neck pain is always to get a comprehensive medical or chiropractic evaluation for a diagnosis, as pain is often a warning signal that something is wrong and needs attention.



Include specific coping techniques as part of your daily routine

Whatever your condition, there are a number of methods to help cope with the pain. All of these techniques make use of four types of skills, including: deep muscle relaxation, distracting your attention away from pain signals, thinking about images or sounds that feel pleasant to you, and attaining detachment and distance.

Several techniques are so simple they can be done anywhere, anytime -- during breakfast, during your morning commute, etc. For example, silent counting is a good way to deal with pain episodes. You might count breaths, tiles in the floor, or even mental images. Another example is Sensory Splitting, in which you divide a sensation into parts. For example, if the pain feels hot or tingling to you, focus on the heat or tingling and not on the hurting.

Connect with others in a similar situation

While this is not for everyone, many people feel better when they can talk with others who are experiencing similar challenges. If you don't have a friend who can adequately relate to your situation, you can connect online through message boards. This will not necessarily take away your pain, but it can do wonders for your emotional health. And others who are in your situation may also have helpful experience or insights to share with you.



Stretch your muscles

Although no single stretch works for everyone. Most people spend most of their days in the same positions doing the same or similar activities. Studies have shown that people who go through a proper stretching program just twice a week for 8 weeks make significant gains in strength, flexibility, and endurance, which is an essential part of most back pain treatment programs. Moreover, the breathing aspects of stretching induce a relaxation response that helps decrease pain.

Eat right and get enough sleep

Good nutrition can aid your healing process. Your diet should include adequate protein as a source of the building blocks of soft tissue healing. Additionally, fresh fruit and vegetables supply the vitamins and trace elements necessary for effective healing. A vitamin supplement can also be very helpful.

Sleep is also important for the body to heal. One of the best ways to help you sleep soundly is to create physical weariness through active exercise. Chronic inactivity does not create a need for the deep sleep that is so important for physical and emotional healing.

Understand your condition to be pro-active with your health

For many unfortunate sufferers, low back and neck pain can be very debilitating. Many chronic back problems can be progressive. "Taking it easy" or "self medicating" may not be the best way to correct most chronic back conditions. As with many physical conditions, the sooner the problem can be diagnosed and treated, the less time may be needed to treat and correct the problem. If left untreated, many chronic back and neck conditions may result in surgery being the only option. If you are having chronic back or neck problems, get yourself evaluated. Discuss the options for treatment with your chiropractor or medical doctor, and be pro-active with your health.

NOVA Pain & Rehab Center specializes in the treatment of chronic back and neck conditions. If you or someone you know is having this problem, call us today and schedule an appointment for a consultation and an evaluation. Call 703-535-8887 to schedule your appointment. Remember, waiting to see if the problem will resolve on it own could invite a more serious condition. Get yourself checked out TODAY!