

Managing Chronic Low Back Pain

How can I manage chronic low back pain?

There's a lot of evidence-based interventions for chronic low back pain! Here are the interventions with the strongest evidence:

- Pharmacological Therapy
 - Naproxen
 - Tramadol
 - Duloxetine
- Topical cayenne
- Electromyography feedback
- Lower-level laser therapy
- **Physical therapy***
- **Cognitive-behavioral therapy***
- **Mindfulness-based stressed reduction***
- Operant therapy
- Progressive Relaxation
- Multidisciplinary Rehabilitation
- Acupuncture
- Spinal Manipulation
- Yoga
- Pilates
- Tai chi
- Motor control exercise
- Exercise (no specific type shown to be better than others)

*see below for more information

Interested in physical therapy?

Physical therapy has been proven to effectively treat chronic low back pain via the following:

- Reducing pain intensity
- Reducing pain duration
- Improving function
- Reducing health care utilization
- Reducing health care costs

		Description	Resources
Upfront Investment Required ↑	Guided Physical Therapy	Guided physical therapy comes with the benefit of working with a professional who can develop an individual plan specific to your limitations, functionality, and pain mechanism. Physical therapists may use advanced techniques, such as the McKenzie method.	Long Trail Physical Therapy www.longtrailphysicaltherapy.com
	At-Home Exercises	In the words of Keith Karpinski, a local physical therapist at Long Trail Physical Therapy, "There are a lot of specialized evidence-based therapies, like the McKenzie Method for example. Some are better than others, but what they all get right is movement, which is so important." We like all these exercises. But, if you find that this is too much, consider sprinkling in one or two of the mentioned practices into your daily routine. After all, these suggestions are meant to help, not discourage. For each exercise, try a couple of sets of 5-10 repetitions.	Chronic Low Back Pain Management At Home Exercises YouTube Playlist https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLt3LiTONaZFqUbN2SKZ-96A8v5EeKqS5V  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Flexibility/Mobility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single knee to chest • Double knee to chest • Lumbar rotations • Supine hamstring stretch • Supine piriformis stretch • Prayer stretch / child's pose • Cat cow/camel </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Stability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges • Bird dogs </div> </div>

Looking to learn more about cognitive-behavioral therapy and mindfulness?

Before talking about cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), we need to talk a little more about what pain actually is, or dedicate a little time to pain neuroscience education (PNE). Chronic pain is very complicated. A large component of chronic pain is increased sensitivity of the nervous system, rather than further injury. Thus, working through a bit of pain during something like physical therapy may be beneficial. Learn more at...

[https://www.physio-pedia.com/Pain_Neuroscience_Education_\(PNE\)](https://www.physio-pedia.com/Pain_Neuroscience_Education_(PNE))

This increased sensitivity can leave one feeling powerless, or in the words of Dr. Richard Pinckney, a local adult primary care internal medicine physician with a clinical interest in chronic pain, “as if they are in an abusive relationship with their bodies.” Overcoming chronic pain requires one to challenge hurtful thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior – which is exactly what cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness do so that you can get up and moving.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy has been proven to effectively treat chronic low back pain via the following:

- Altering pain perception
- Helping to regain functionality
- Reducing sick leave
- Reducing health care costs

		Description	Resources
Upfront Investment required ↑	In Person	<p>The UVM Pain clinic facilitates group visits by medical providers in mindfulness and movement classes, as well as integrative therapies like massage.</p> <p>Community Mindfulness Sessions at Mindfulness for Mental Health offers free, drop-in community mediation that is guided.</p>	<p>University of Vermont Comprehensive Pain Clinic https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/Pages/Departments-and-Programs/Comprehensive-Pain-Program.aspx</p>  <p>Community Mindfulness Sessions at Mindfulness for Mental Health www.ninalarosa.com</p>
	Online Sessions	Check out these free weekly online sessions	Center for Mindfulness - University of Massachusetts www.umassmed.edu/cfm
	Books	Here are some classic books in the field. Check the Frymoyer Community Health Resource Center on Level 3 of the Main Pavillion at the UVM Medical Center’s Main Campus in Burlington to see if these books are available at the patient library.	<p>Managing Chronic Pain Before it Manages You By Margaret A Caudill ISBN 978-1-59385-982-4</p> <p>Natural Pain Relief By Shinzen Young ISBN 978-1-60407-088-0</p> <p>Frymoyer Community Health Resource Center https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/wellness-resources/community-health-resource-center</p> 
	Audio Files	Mindfulness Meditation for Pain Relief is available at any major retailer.	Mindfulness Meditation for Pain Relief By Jon Kabat-Zinn
	Applications for PDAs	Try some of the most popular phone applications. Headspace offers 30 sessions specially for pain management.	Stop Breath and Think Headspace