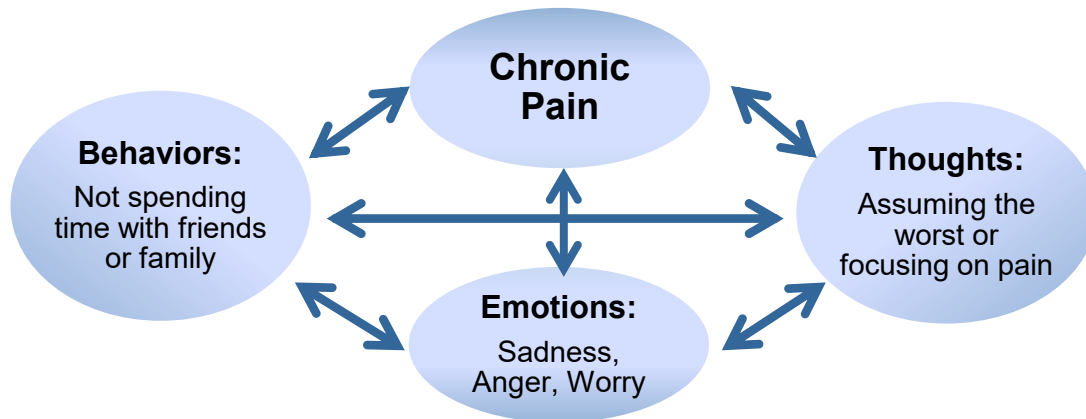


Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain

This treatment focuses on how you think, feel, and behave in relation to your pain. As shown in the picture below, these things are all related:



For example, chronic pain could lead to:

- Thoughts like, “I’m never going to feel better”
- Avoiding activities, even ones that you enjoy
- Feeling sad, angry, or worried

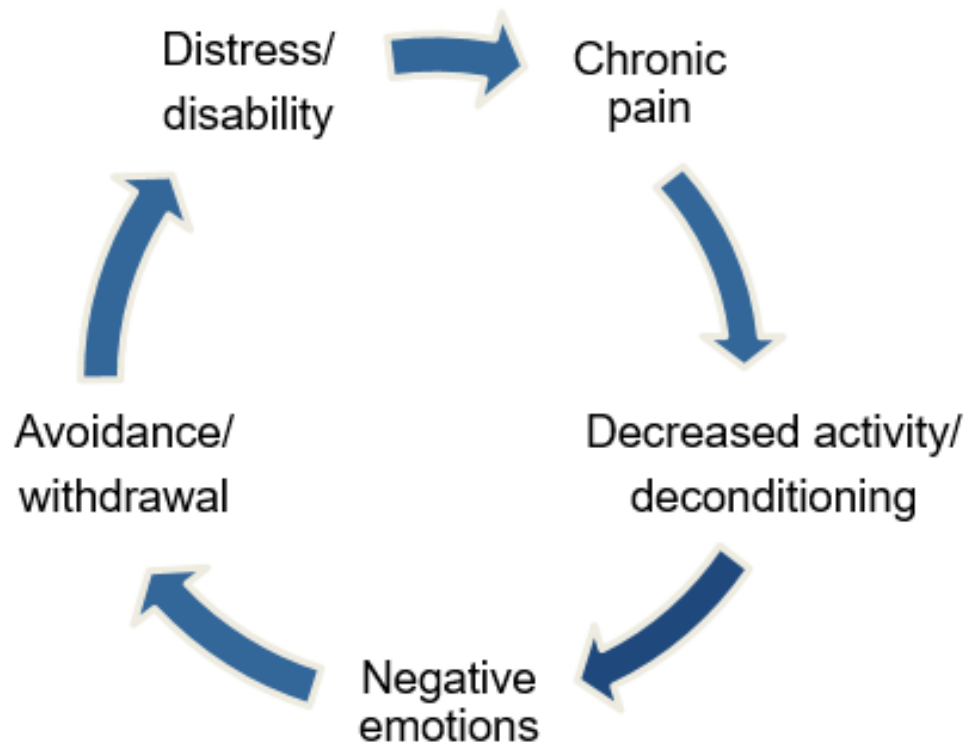
The goal of this treatment is to help you address these common reactions to chronic pain so that you feel more confident in your ability to do things you enjoy and live a full and meaningful life despite having pain.

Brief CBT-CP Objectives

- Learn new strategies to cope with pain
- Improve your physical and emotional functioning
- Decrease how often you experience flare-ups as well as how much they impact you
- Reduce the intensity of your pain

The Chronic Pain Cycle

Many people with chronic pain fear that movement will increase pain or cause physical damage/injury. This fear often leads a decrease in activities which then leads to physical deconditioning (e.g., less strength and stamina, weight gain). Dealing with constant pain may also lead to negative thoughts and emotions such as frustration and depression. **All of these factors contribute to increased avoidance of people and activities.**



THE COSTS OF INACTIVITY

While this cycle is understandable for those with chronic pain, *it is not helpful!* In fact, getting stuck in this cycle actually makes things worse over time:

- More pain
- Poor physical fitness
- Less time with family and friends
- Depressed mood or increased irritability
- Lower self-esteem
- Increased strain on relationships
- Decreased quality of life

Factors That Impact Pain

Chronic pain is impacted by many factors. The interactions among these factors (shown below) influence how you feel overall:

1. Biological factors

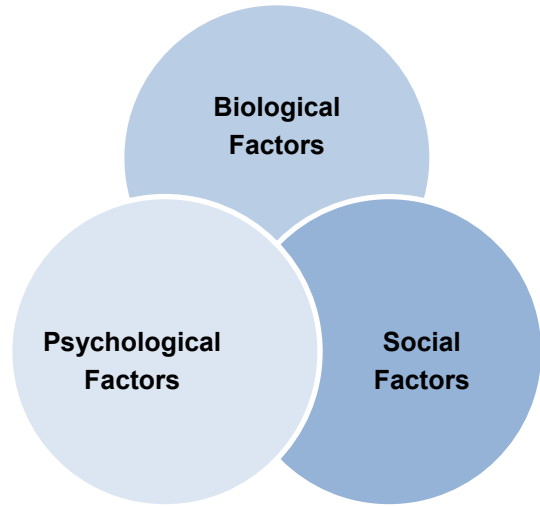
- Pain, medical issues

2. Psychological factors

- Emotions, attention, thoughts

3. Social factors

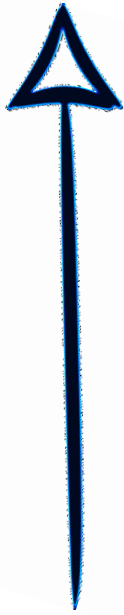
- Relationships, job, hobbies



The good news is that while some factors may increase your pain, others may decrease it. *You can decide how to manage many of these factors.*

Below are just a few examples of factors that may impact your pain:

Factors That May Increase Pain	Factors That May Decrease Pain
<i>Physical Factors</i>	
Illness or new injuries	Seeking medical treatments
Muscle tension	Using relaxation techniques
<i>Thoughts</i>	
Expecting the worst	Balancing positive and negative thinking
Focusing on pain	Distracting yourself
<i>Emotions</i>	
Depression or anger	Appropriate emotional expression, seeking social support, engaging in pleasant activities



Factors That May Increase Pain	Factors That May Decrease Pain
Stress/worry/anxiety	Exercising safely and using relaxation techniques
Behaviors	
Too much (<i>or too little</i>) activity	Pacing yourself
Lack of involvement in hobbies	Doing more of what you enjoy
Social Interactions	
Social isolation	Spending time with family and/or friends
Lack of (<i>or too much</i>) support from others	Volunteering/staying involved with community



What are some things that have helped make your experience with pain better?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are some things that have made your experience with pain worse?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SMART Goal Setting

A SMART goal uses the following guidelines:

S	Specific	Should identify a specific action or event that will take place. In other words, “What specifically do I want to do?”
M	Measurable	Should be able to track progress. In other words, “How will I know I have met my goal?”
A	Attainable	Should be attainable and realistic. In other words, “Is this really something that I can do?”
R	Relevant	Should be personally meaningful and really matter. In other words, “How important is this to me?”
T	Time-bound	Should state the time period for accomplishing the goal. In other words, “By when do I want to achieve this goal?”

Adapted from Doran, 1981

SMART Goal Versus Non-SMART Goal

Non-SMART Goal: *I want to get into physical shape.*

SMART Goal: *I want to be more active by walking twice a week for 30 minutes for the next three months so that I can keep up with my grandchildren when I see them during the holidays.*

Non-SMART Goal: *I want to be more social.*

SMART Goal: *I want to go watch a movie and eat dinner with my friends once a week for the next three months so I spend less time alone while I manage my chronic pain.*

From Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain: Therapist Manual v 2.0 (Beehler, et al., 2021).

Short-term goals can be accomplished over the course of this treatment (about 3 months). For each goal, consider if it fits the SMART criteria listed above. These should be personally meaningful goals that motivate you to complete the program and improve your pain management skills. Once goals are identified, track them on a weekly basis to ensure that progress is occurring. If it is not, make adjustments as needed.

Short-Term Goals

In the space below, write down SMART goals you would like to achieve in the next three months.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Accomplishing short-term goals keeps us motivated to achieve long-term goals. Long-term goals are those for the next 6–12 months (or even longer). They will not be accomplished fully during this program, but you can continue to work towards them using the skills you have developed.

Long-Term Goals

In the space below, write down SMART goals you would like to achieve in the next 6 –12 months.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____