

Pain- Packaged in a tidy parcel - for General Practitioners

Pain pathways are helpful in terms of showing us how to manage pain. The descending pathways are crucial for pain management. We can enhance the descending inhibition by:

- 1) **Education** - Cognitive Cortex
- 2) **Movement, exercise** - Motor Cortex
- 3) **Managing depression** - Thalamus, Hippocampus
- 4) **Mindfulness and Meditation** -- enhancing parasympathetic activity in the spinal cord and medulla.
- 5) **Neuropathic Pain Management** - Dorsal horn of the spinal cord and the limbic system- Pregabalin

Resources:

Neuropathic Pain Treatment:

Pregabalin 25mg Bd for 5/7, then 50mg Bd for 5/7 then 75mg Bd
Increase to 150mg Bd or until analgesia occurs.

Slower dose increases are required if the patient is elderly, requires higher cognitive functioning or is operating heavy machinery.

Education:

Patient information about opiates

<http://www.choosingwisely.org/patient-resources/medicines-to-relieve-chronic-pain/>

The Pain Book by Phillip Siddall. This is a compassionate book written in layman's terms by a Pain Specialist in Sydney

Explain Pain by Butler and Moseley. This gives a more in depth description of how pain works. It is written in playful terms with gorgeous illustrations. This is more academic than The Pain Book.

This is a web site developed by the Department of Health for chronic pain sufferers.
<http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain>

Exercise:

Walking- daily. Start at 5 minutes per day and increase by 5 minutes per day per week.

Swimming- Aqua aerobics, laps, using a kick board

Pilates- Start with private lessons before attending a class.

Tai Chi

Depression:

Many patients with persistent pain have low mood. Treatment with an antidepressant can revolutionize their progress.

Escitalopram 10mg mane for 2 weeks then 20mg mane is usually well tolerated.

Mindfulness and Meditation

This is a site that shows a person how to perform mindfulness. It also offers some useful meditation exercises. For a long term reduction in anxiety to occur, The individual should practice both mindfulness and meditation on a daily basis over many months.

http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/get-help/guided-exercises/mindfulness.shtml