

## **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](http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/get-help/guided-exercises/mindfulness.shtml)