Primary care pathway: for adults living with chronic pain - Regina

Prevention

- Chronic Pain and Exercise Fact Sheet
- City of Regina Leisure Guide
- Regina - Forever in Motion
- Physical Activity Tips for Adults
- Regina - Paul Schwartz Centre
- PainBC Movement YouTube

Assessment

1. Treatment Goals
Healthcare visits are busy. If you have many health issues, your provider may not be able to cover everything in one visit. Prepare before your visit to know your questions and priorities. Complete this Self-Management Navigator Tool before your visit and bring the form when you meet with your provider.

Self-Management Navigator Tool

2. Focused Pain History
You may be asked to complete questionnaires before or during your visit or be asked about your pain:
- When did your pain start?
- What makes it better or worse?
- Where is your pain located?
- How intense is your pain?
- Does your pain change throughout the day?

These questions may help your provider better understand your pain and the treatments that may help.

3. Assessment for Pain Interference
Your healthcare provider may ask you to fill in questionnaires that ask about ways that pain gets in the way of your activities, thoughts, or daily life. This is called “pain interference”.

Risk Factors

- Red-flags
  - The large majority of chronic pain is not caused by something life-threatening.
  - Your healthcare provider may send you for special tests or to a physician specialist for further assessment.
  - It is important to treat your pain using the 4P’s of pain management while you wait for results from any special tests or specialist appointments (see page 2 for examples of 4P’s treatments).

- Trauma
  - Your healthcare provider may ask you questions about adverse events in childhood, chronic stress, or post-traumatic stress disorder.
  - These events can contribute to chronic pain for some people.
  - Treatment for these experiences can also improve your pain.

- Mental health
  - Your provider may ask you questions or have you fill in a questionnaire to ask about depression, anxiety, or worried thoughts.
  - Difficulties with mental health can make pain worse, and pain can lead to poor mental health.
  - It is very common for people who live with pain to also have difficulties with mental health.
  - Tell your provider if you are struggling with mental health or worried thoughts.
  - Treating mental health can also improve your pain.

- Substance use
  - Your healthcare provider may ask you questions about your past use of substances such as alcohol or drugs.
  - Knowing about your history with substances will help your healthcare provider know what treatments are safe for you.

Management

The best pain treatment uses a combination of the 4P’s.

What to expect with your chronic pain assessment: Your healthcare provider may take several visits to assess your pain. These visits are some ways your pain may be assessed and how you can be ready for the assessment.

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Self-Management Navigator Tool

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2b. Physical Exam
Your healthcare providers may assess your physical condition before your visit. They may test range of motion, strength, and tenderness. This will help determine what is causing your pain and treatments that may help. With certain types of chronic pain, your physical exam may be normal or what is found on physical exam may not explain your pain. Often, for these types of pain, assessments like x-rays, CAT scans, and MRIs also do not explain your pain and may not be helpful.

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Risk Factors Screening: Your healthcare provider may screen for serious problems (red-flags), trauma, and substance use. Your provider may also assess your mental health since pain may affect or be affected by depression, anxiety, and life stress.

Red-flags
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What to expect with Chronic Pain Treatment:
Many health care providers may be involved in your pain management, but self-management is the most important part of chronic pain management. This is also true for other chronic conditions, like diabetes or high blood pressure. People living with chronic pain have the best outcomes when they use a 4 P’s approach to pain management rather than just relying on medications or treatments from healthcare providers. Active treatments like physical activity and mental health practices have the most benefit to help people LIVE WELL even through they have pain. For most people, what is needed to treat pain changes over time. That means that a treatment that didn’t work in the past may help you now. Work with your healthcare providers and try new things to find what works for you. Most treatments for chronic pain take time to work. While some work right away, others can take weeks to start helping.
### PHYSICAL and PREVENTION TREATMENT SUPPORTS

Movement is an important pain management strategy that reduces pain, and improves sleep, function, and overall wellbeing. Restful sleep, healthy nutrition and stopping smoking can all help reduce pain.

| Chronic Pain and Exercise Fact Sheet | Regina - Primary Physical Therapy ‡ | Physical Therapist directory ‡ |
| SMART Goal Worksheet | Regina - Forever in Motion | Chiropractor directory ‡ |
| PainBC Gentle Movement @Home Videos | Provincially covered Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology | Registered Massage Therapist directory ‡ |
| CADTH patient resource for physical strategies | Spine Pathway patient information | Occupational Therapist directory ‡ |
| CADTH patient resource for preventive strategies | City of Regina Leisure Guide ‡ | Guidance on selecting a manual therapy clinician |
| Physical Activity Tips for Adults | Regina - Paul Schwann Centre ‡ | Canada Food Guide |
| My Sleep Well — sleep hygiene | PACT Smoking Cessation Support | Food Bank — Help is Here |

### PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENTS—SELF-MANAGEMENT, SUPPORT GROUPS, and MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Chronic pain can impact all aspects of a persons life, including employment/school, relationships, and mental health. Chronic pain can make a person feel alone. Psychological strategies can be learned on your own, with peers, or with a mental health care provider.

| Non-insured Health Benefits for First Nations and Inuit Counselling | LiveWell with Chronic Pain | Psychologist Directory ‡ |
| Mobile Crisis Services | Wascana Adult Rehab Chronic Pain Education Program: (306) 766-5714 | Social Worker Directory ‡ |
| 24/7 Help Lines | SaskPain Living with Pain — see wellbeing and mental health supports | Arthritis Support |
| Regina - SHA Adult mental health clinics | Online Therapy Unit Chronic Health Conditions Course | Narcotics Anonymous |
| CADTH patient resource for psychological strategies | TAPMI Pain Education: Understanding Your Pain | Alcoholics Anonymous-Regina |
| Pain Canada - Live Plan Be + | |

### PHARMACEUTICAL TREATMENTS — MEDICATION SUPPORTS

Medications may not get rid of your pain, but they may help reduce your pain while you become more active in your pain self-management with movement and psychological strategies. Some medications, like opioids, can make some types of pain worse. Tell your healthcare provider if you have unpleasant side effects with your medication.

| Med Sask — pharmacist on call 1-800-665-3784 (Saskatchewan) | Medication Assessment Centre — book an appointment with a pharmacist to review your medications | RxFiles — General information about pain |
| RxFiles — Opioid Tapering | RxFiles — Questions about Sleeping Pills | RxFiles — Pain Links |
| Take home naloxone map — if you take opioids | Health Canada — What You Need to Know about Opioids | Institute for Safe Medication Practices — Storage and Disposal of Opioids |