

# ***Manage Your Pain, Improve Your Health***

Having pain for weeks, months or years is not normal. Chronic pain, or pain lasting more than 6 weeks, can be a mild annoyance or so bad that it gets in the way of your daily activities. Soreness, stiffness, tightness, aching, shooting, or burning are ways that some people describe their chronic pain. Many people suffer from chronic pain; 1 of every 4 patients in a primary care medical clinic does.

People with chronic pain are four times more likely to be depressed and, because of their pain, are at an increased risk of suicide. People with chronic pain are also at a higher risk for anxiety and substance abuse.

## ***Chronic Pain Challenges***

Pain is a common complaint and because there isn't a "pain-meter", what is mild to one person could be debilitating to someone else. It's a complex illness that often goes along with other medical issues so finding the source of chronic pain can often be a challenge.

Chronic pain patients are often judged unfairly because some medications prescribed can be addictive. Because we are a primary care clinic, we take a holistic approach to your care.

Living with and managing chronic pain is a challenge. Working together, using our evidence-based approach, to understand your pain and developing a care plan just for you can improve the quality of your life.

## ***Our Chronic Pain Treatment Approach***

Our professional, compassionate medical and behavioral healthcare providers take an evidence-based approach and work with you to help you manage your pain. We believe that a good relationship, built on trust and respect, is at the core of effectively managing chronic pain.

Rarely are we able to completely eliminate chronic pain, so our treatment goals focus on helping improve the quality of your life. Because the reason for chronic pain is often unclear, a complete evaluation takes place over 3 or 4 visits, helping to determine the best management plan for you.

## ***What Happens During the Complete Evaluation?***

During your first evaluation visit, you will complete a chronic pain questionnaire. We will review your current medications, seek other medical records that will help in the evaluation, and ask you to provide a urine sample.

Your second evaluation visit includes a full review of your pain and medical history. Along with a physical exam, we will also screen for depression and the potential for substance

abuse using nationally recognized tools. *If you miss this visit without notifying us, future appointments will be cancelled.*

On your last evaluation visit, your pain diagnosis will be discussed, a plan of care will be determined and medications may be prescribed. Depending on medications prescribed, you may be asked to sign a controlled substance agreement.

Throughout each visit, you will learn more about chronic pain and how to manage it. Working with our medical and behavioral healthcare providers, you will learn a variety of approaches to managing your pain. Prescription medication may be a part of your plan of care but it will not be the only focus and no controlled substance medications will be prescribed until a complete evaluation has taken place.