

Pain Management Strategies for Women with Chronic Pain

Women's chronic pain is most effectively managed when it attends to the multifaceted nature of pain. This goes beyond treating the physical symptoms, to also consider the psychological and social factors that impact their pain. The pain management strategies described below were identified from a larger study on women's chronic pain and prescription opioid use. Many of the strategies can be used in tandem to cater to the unique needs, experiences, and chronic pain that women experience.



Medical Interventions

Medical, surgical, physician-led interventions for chronic pain that include a range of procedures and treatments administered by healthcare professionals to alleviate or manage persistent pain.

Examples may include:

- Botox
- Spinal Cord Stimulation
- Surgery
- Trigger Point Therapy

helpful for:

- ➡ Improving functionality & mobility
- ➡ Improving sleep
- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Managing symptoms
- ➡ Tapering off medication

Pharmaceuticals

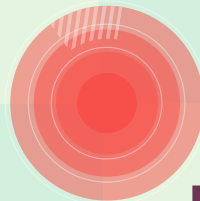
Prescribed and non-prescribed medications that are advised healthcare professionals to help manage acute or chronic pain. The choice of medication will depend on the nature and intensity of the pain, as well as individual health considerations.

Examples may include:

- Anticonvulsants
- Anti-depressants
- Opioids
- NSAIDs
- Hormonal Therapies
- Triptans

helpful for:

- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Addressing nerve pain
- ➡ Managing symptoms



Lifestyle Interventions

Habits and self-management techniques that contribute to overall well-being and help alleviate or cope with chronic pain. Lifestyle strategies will be unique to each individual based on affordability, interests/preferences, efficacy, mobility, etc.

Examples may include:

- Exercise (e.g., yoga, strength-training)
- Diet
- Stretching
- Meditation

helpful for:

- ➡ Improving mental health & mood
- ➡ Improving mobility & strength
- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Longevity



Physical & Manual Therapies

Physical and manual therapies use exercise and therapeutic interventions to enhance physical function, mobility, and overall well-being for people with chronic pain conditions.

Examples may include:

- Chiropractor
- Massage Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Trigger point therapy
- TENS

helpful for:

- ➡ Improving sleep
- ➡ Improving mental health & mood
- ➡ Improving functionality & mobility
- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Managing symptoms

Interdisciplinary Pain Programs

Interdisciplinary pain programs combine strategies from different healthcare disciplines to address the biopsychosocial nature of pain.

Examples may include:

- Integrative pain team
- Multidisciplinary rehabilitation
- Interdisciplinary pain management
- Multidisciplinary programs

helpful for:

- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Improving sleep
- ➡ Developing coping skills
- ➡ Improving mental health & mood
- ➡ Improving functionality & mobility

Psychological Supports

Psychological supports use therapeutic approaches to address the emotional and cognitive aspects that may be related to, or emerge from living with chronic pain.

Examples may include:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Pain Coping Skills
- Mindfulness
- Psychotherapy

helpful for:

- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Reducing pain-related distress
- ➡ Relaxing
- ➡ Developing coping skills
- ➡ Improving sleep
- ➡ Managing symptoms



Cultural Practices

Cultural practices recognize the cultural influences and understandings of pain, and culturally appropriate approaches to managing chronic pain that support women's overall health and wellbeing.

Examples may include:

- Acupuncture
- Land-based healing
- Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)
- Smudging



helpful for:

- ➡ Increasing quality of life
- ➡ Improving mental health & mood
- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Connecting to culture and self

Other

Additional pain strategies and innovative approaches offer alternate avenues for individuals seeking relief from pain and related symptoms.

Examples may include:

- Cannabis
- Time

helpful for:

- ➡ Improving sleep
- ➡ Improving mental health & mood
- ➡ Reducing pain
- ➡ Developing coping skills
- ➡ Improving sleep
- ➡ Managing symptoms



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