

PAIN

Are you in pain? If the answer is "Yes", then you are not alone. More than 75 million Americans suffer from chronic pain. This is pain that has persisted over six months. While most chronic pain is not terminal, it will disrupt one's life to an extent that he or she feels that they have no life.

Chronic pain impacts an individual in virtually all areas of living: physically, behaviorally, vocationally, and socially. It is estimated that approximately 30-100% of chronic pain victims also experience some level of depression due to the constant pain.

The disease of chronic pain extends beyond the sufferer. Family members are emotionally affected as they watch a loved one hurting and are unable to help ease the pain. Families may be financially affected. Medical expenses often soar, or loss of income may occur, if the pain victim is unable to work at their normal level or usual occupation.

The economic impact of the disease reaches into the business sector, both public and private. The expense of medical diagnostics and treatments, compensation for lost wages, lost productivity, and personnel replacement costs, drive up the cost of products and increases insurance rates.

Federal and State programs such as social Security Disability Income and Workers' Compensation Insurance burden our tax dollars. The most significant findings of the insurance industry research is that the number of chronic pain victims is increasing each year.

I have been in the field of physical therapy since the mid 1960's, licensed as a private practitioner since 1973, and for

the past 13 years I have specialized in treating patients with chronic pain.

Throughout the years approaches to pain and pain management have changed. There was a time when the most progressive medical minds of the day believed that the mind and body had nothing to do with each other. Today we know that it is as far from the truth as one can travel.

God made us in His image and created a wonderfully orchestrated body. Sometimes, however, things go amiss, and we have pain. I believe, however, as Renee Rescartes wrote, "My thought compares a sick man and an ill made clock. . .," they can both be repaired.

Pain is divided into two categories: acute, which is pain that persists less than six months, and chronic, which lasts longer than six months. The first thing that pain sufferers need is support—emotional, physical, and spiritual. Remember, one cannot separate an integrated system.

Treatments by medical professionals and home exercise programs help relieve pain but many pain victims are unable to return to active lives. Let's join minds and hearts to fight and find a solution to the enigma of pain.

"Pain does not have to be a way of life."

If you are experiencing pain or need information on treating painful conditions, write to me at the Orthopaedic Section, ATTN: Tom Watson, MEd, PT, and I will address your concerns.

Tom Watson, MEd, PT

Program at CSM February 14, 1997 at Dallas, Texas

Speakers start at 8:00 a.m.

Functional Capacity Evaluations and Pain Physiology
Joe Kleinkort, PhD, PT and Tom Watson, MEd, PT

Business Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

- Upcoming possibility of continuing ED program
- Elections
- New discoveries in pain management
- Newsletters

If you are interested in joining the Pain Management SIG, call the Orthopaedic Section at 1-800-444-3982 or me, Tom Watson, MEd, PT, your Pain Management SIG Chairperson, at 1-619-291-6282.

Remember — "Pain does not have to be a way of life!"

