

## **Current Topics in Pain Webinar Series**

The **Current Topics in Pain** webinar planned for October will be postponed until Winter 2019. We look forward to providing this exciting educational opportunity to our membership. Further details will be available in the new year.

### **Talking About Pain Using Analogies and Metaphors**

Understanding neuroplasticity helps shape how we educate our patients with chronic pain. Making sense of the science can be especially difficult when talking to a child or a teenager who is struggling with school attendance, the loss of friends, withdrawal from loved activities and now finds comfort in video games. To help meet this challenge, I recommend this video to my young patients with chronic pain. The video shows how learning to ride a bicycle in a totally new way is incredibly hard because our brains have become efficient at doing it one way. To learn a new way to ride a bike requires effort and time, but it can be done! When talking to pediatric patients, I emphasize how the child in this video learns to ride a bike in a new way much faster than the parent. Youth has its advantages, but the potential for retraining the brain exists at any age. We are capable of building new pathways by thinking differently and finding ways to move. The video doesn't explain specifics of chronic pain, but it is a start in helping patients understand that they can change their pain experience. Although I use this video with children and teens, adults may also find it beneficial!

<https://ed.ted.com/featured/bf2mRAfC>

The next link is to a site that discusses and lists metaphors and analogies can help children understand all aspects of chronic pain: the differences between acute and chronic, pain transmission, factors that explain the pain experience, and pain rehabilitation. Finding ways to explain the neuroscience of pain can be made simpler by using examples young children can understand. I find that once I start thinking like a child, I can find endless ways to explain pain in order to reduce the fear and anxiety around movement.

[http://childpain.org/ppl/issues/v15n1\\_2013/v15n1\\_coakley.shtml](http://childpain.org/ppl/issues/v15n1_2013/v15n1_coakley.shtml)

This Clinical Pearl was provided by Nancy Durben PT, MSPT. Nancy is Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), Portland, OR and a Pediatric Clinical Specialist working in outpatient Pediatric Physical Therapy at the Institute of Development and Disability at OHSU. She helped start the Pediatric Pain Management Center in 2001 at Doernbecher Children's Hospital which is now part of the Comprehensive Pain Management Center (CPMC) at OHSU. She is a guest speaker at the Mindful Yoga for Chronic Pain course offered through the OHSU's CPMC, speaks regionally and nationally on chronic pain issues in the bleeding disorders community and is active in clinical research.

Clinical Pearls reflect succinct, clinically relevant information drawn from your experience that can benefit patient care but may not be found in the medical literature. We'd love to hear your suggestions. Please send your ideas for a Clinical Pearl to Bill Rubine at [Rubineb@ohsu.edu](mailto:Rubineb@ohsu.edu) or Carolyn McManus at [carolyn@carolynmcmanus.com](mailto:carolyn@carolynmcmanus.com).