

Persistent Pain

What is persistent pain	Chronic pain is a pain which has failed to improve with standardised medical treatments and recurs or lasts for more than 3 to 6 months, beyond the healing time of an injured tissue. All tissues in the human body heal within approximately 3 to 6 months after the initial injury but sometimes pain continues despite complete tissue healing. Therefore, chronic pain doesn't indicate the actual tissue damage anymore. Here, pain which was supposed to be a protective starts to behave like a nuisance, restricting you from all the things, and activities you enjoy in life.
What causes it and how common is it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In most episodes of persistent pain, a specific underlying cause is not identifiable.• At any one given time, around 20 percent of the world's population have pain that has lasted for more than 3 months. To put things into context that's 2 million Londoners!• Common risk factor include Biological factors such as previous injury and poor general health or pre-existing medical conditions. Psychological factors such as emotional distress, mood disorders, and lifestyle factors such as job dissatisfaction or strenuous jobs , high levels of stress, obesity and smoking etc.
What are the signs and symptoms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pain that continues for three months or more• Pain that may not have responded to the standard medical treatment.• Pain that often seems unpredictable or seems like it is spreading• Pain that can be exacerbated by lack of sleep, stress and or anxiety• Pain that is so effective that, at times you can't think, feel or focus on anything else
How is Persistent pain diagnosed? Do I need an x-ray or scan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mostly, persistent can be diagnosed with a clinical examination even if symptoms are severe and debilitating. Clinical correlation will be done by Healthcare professionals if required to rule out any rheumatological cause.• X-rays are very rarely useful in identifying and managing persistent pain.• MRI scans are rarely indicated with persistent pain and only used in cases where surgery is considered• Research and international guidelines suggest it is not necessary to identify the specific tissue source of pain for the effective management of persistent pain
How long does this take to improve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pain is a very personal event and your pain will never be the same pain as that experienced by your health professional or anyone else for that matter. So it is fair to say that everyone's recovery timeframes will depend on how long and how severe their symptoms are.• At Healthshare, we are committed to helping you make sense of your pain and ultimately help improve your quality of life.
What are my treatment options?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management is primarily aimed at education, gaining understanding of your body and guidance on how to work with it.• Identification of modifiable factors (biomedical, psychological and social) is essential to achieve optimal functional status.• Remember, it requires patience, persistence and courage.• This aid is to help you and your healthcare professional decide what treatment options you have and together make a decision that is best for you.

What are my treatment options?	What does this treatment involve?	How effective are they?	What are the advantages?	Are there any side effects or complication?
Self-care / Guided self-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education: learning more about persistent pain helps you to understand the nature of the condition and in turn reduce anxiety around pain. Simple basic exercises- to maintain movement lifestyle modification: pace yourself with activities of daily living to avoid flare ups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is good evidence that learning more about your problems helps with improving pain and function. Self-management had good evidence to support the use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can administer at your convenience Active control on the management options No side effects No limitation on the number of times that can be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Physiotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This involves doing a clinical examination to establish a diagnosis and provide education about the problem you have, advise on specific exercises, activity modification and setting goals. Advise on heat/ice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good evidence Recommended to all patients who fail to improve with self-care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No side-effects Specialist personalised advise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in pain post exercises initially, as the body may not be used to them. This should get easier with time, but patience, persistence and trust are required.
Orthotics , Acupuncture, Electrotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This involves belt, corset, straps, braces acupuncture, cupping, ultrasound, TENS, PENS , Interferential therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor evidence over-all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No documented advantages compared with exercises alone TENS can help temporarily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased pain bruises, soreness, dependency etc.
PACE – Pain and Coping Skills Education workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First stage in to the Pain service One-off educational workshop run by specialist physiotherapist and psychological therapist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is good evidence that an approach aimed at both physical and psychological needs is effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthcare professionals Specialising in pain delivering program Forum to share your experience and ideas with people with similar symptoms and take first steps towards achieving their personal gaols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Pain medications review with specialist pharmacist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone review for pain medication with one of our specialist pain pharmacist to discuss options of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Painkillers/NSAIDs can be useful in the initial painful stage in providing symptomatic relief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster pain relief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Side effects associated with each pain killers that is variable from gastritis, dizziness, constipation etc. Please see the individual medicine related leaflet for more side effects.
PMP – Pain Management Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive programme based on cognitive behavioural approach (CBA) and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) 2 ½ hour session each week for 6 consecutive weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good evidence on success on group pain management programme for people with long-term health conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to try to help people cope with their pain and to start to take the first steps on the path of recovering life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment and active involvement is essential for success
Psychological therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking therapy service for people struggling with low mood, lack of confidence, stress, anxiety and depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent review showed more than 55% of people reported more than 50% of improvement in their symptoms Effective when combined with exercises and other approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides better understanding regarding pain, biopsychosocial contributing factors and coping strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil immediate improvement Active involvement is of vital importance.
Injection and Surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epidural injection Surgical intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor evidence when used for persistent pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible can provide transient, short-term relief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of infection Post injection /surgical pain or flare ups Complications such as, bleeding, injury to other nerve etc.