

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL  
THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

# CHRONIC PAIN

Chronic pain can be caused by a variety of conditions and illnesses. It is often difficult to diagnose the source of a patient's chronic pain and treat the symptoms. To give patients relief, The Center for Integrative Medicine uses techniques that empower patients to manage their conditions.

**INSIDE:**

- Chronic pain and integrative medicine p.1
- Considerations p.2
- How integrative medicine can benefit your patients p.3
- General information p.4

## THREE CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TREATING CHRONIC PAIN:

---

1.

Pain is considered to be chronic when a patient has experienced three to six months of ongoing pain. Chronic pain can be caused by a number of conditions. While there isn't one specific cause, there seems to be an overlap between chronic pain and conditions with altered electrical and chemical nerve signals. Patients commonly report experiencing chronic pain as a result of conditions such as headaches, cancer, arthritis, low back pain or myofascial pain syndrome.

---

2.

When treating chronic pain, the medical model of care is typically suboptimal. Because many patients with chronic pain suffer from other conditions (depression or chronic fatigue syndrome) that don't respond well to conventional therapy, a strong understanding of integrative treatment options is helpful.

---

3.

Studies suggest that chronic pain is best managed and treated with a multidisciplinary approach. The care you provide your patient may work on its own; however, treatment is often more successful when conventional care is augmented by complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapy and self-care strategies. The Center for Integrative Medicine will work with your patient and develop a personalized treatment plan in order to complement the therapy you've prescribed.

# HOW INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE CAN BENEFIT YOUR PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC PAIN:

---

## TYPICAL TREATMENT PLAN

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS VISIT**

**TREATMENT PLAN OF SLEEP, EXERCISE AND BEHAVIORAL THERAPY**

**NON-NARCOTIC MEDICATION MANAGEMENT**

**CONSIDERATION OF CAM THERAPIES**

**EXERCISE JOURNAL**

**FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS**

**LETTER TO PHYSICIANS**

---



*fig. 1 - When combined with conventional care, chiropractic performed by an experienced and certified chiropractor can be a helpful and effective treatment option for chronic back pain.*

## CAM THERAPIES\* AND SELF-CARE STRATEGIES USED TO TREAT CHRONIC PAIN

### **EXERCISE**

A low impact aerobic exercise routine can help control chronic pain. To promote daily exercise, a physician will create and discuss an individualized and graded program of aerobic exercise with your patient. To develop strength and flexibility, patients may be referred to a physical therapist.

### **COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY**

In order to change self-defeating behaviors and enhance belief in self-efficacy, patients are encouraged to work with one of The Center for Integrative Medicine's experienced psychologists. In addition to cognitive behavior therapy, the psychologist may lead patients through stress-reduction techniques such as meditation, focused breathing or biofeedback.

### **COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (CAM) THERAPIES**

If appropriate, The Center for Integrative Medicine's physicians and practitioners may recommend CAM therapies such as massage, acupuncture and chiropractic. The combination of these therapies with conventional care can be an effective way to treat specific types of chronic pain.

\*Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies are alternative medicine treatments such as acupuncture or chiropractic that are used to complement traditional conventional care provided by physicians.

# SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

Your patients can schedule appointments at The Center for Integrative Medicine by calling 720.848.1090. Appointments can be made Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm, with limited evening availability. If you would like to provide us with information prior to a patient's visit (encouraged), please fax a consult and/or relevant records to 720.848.1277.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

**THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE**  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL  
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS  
ANSCHUTZ OUTPATIENT PAVILION

1635 Aurora Court, MS F743  
Fifth Floor, Suite 5501  
Aurora, Colorado 80045  
**P:** 720.848.1090 | **F:** 720.848.1277  
**[www.uch.edu/integrativemed](http://www.uch.edu/integrativemed)**

---

*By making this information available, the University of Colorado Hospital and The Center for Integrative Medicine do not promise or guarantee the effectiveness of integrative therapy.*



University  
of Colorado  
Hospital

ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL  
CAMPUS