

Multidimensional Diagnosis for Chronic Pain Conditions

Discipline and Providers	Causal Factors and Indications	Approaches to Diagnosis	Therapeutic Interventions
<p>Conventional Medicine Primary care physician, orthopedist, sports medicine doctor, physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist, neurologist, neurosurgeon, rheumatologist</p>	<p>Injuries of any magnitude Pain conditions that have persisted for more than three months Comorbidities that may also be contributing to the pain</p>	<p>Labs; imaging such as X-rays, MRI, EMG (electromyogram), ultrasound, and other diagnostic tools</p>	<p>Intra-articular injections, facet and nerve blocks, epidural steroid injections, anti-inflammatory, immune modulating and pain medication, physical therapy, physical medicine and rehabilitation, surgery</p>
<p>Integrative or Functional Medicine Providers who practice functional medicine (MD, ND, DO, PA, NP)</p>	<p>Disorders involving chronic pain or inflammation, low neurotransmitter levels, hormones out of balance, or chronic stress</p>	<p>Lab work including markers for inflammation, nutrient deficiencies, oxidative stress levels, mitochondrial dysfunction, gut dysbiosis, hormone and neurotransmitter levels, the cortisol curve</p>	<p>Treatment with nutrients, herbs, medications, bioidentical hormones, prescribed lifestyle, referrals to integrative therapies</p>
<p>Structural/Biomechanics Chiropractor, osteopath, craniosacral therapist, physical therapist, Rolfer, exercise therapist, Alexander Technique</p>	<p>Acute or chronic pain in the neck, shoulders, hips, low back, or joints Disorders such as spinal stenosis, osteoarthritis, TMJ/jaw pain, headaches and some migraines, sprains and strains, posture problems Referred pain</p>	<p>Hands-on evaluation of the musculoskeletal system for functionality, movement, and range of motion, with palpation of the tissues to identify the precise area of pain or referred pain, and to briefly reproduce the pain</p>	<p>Manipulative therapy: chiropractic adjustment, mobilization, craniosacral therapy, prescribed exercise, nutrition</p>
<p>Myofascial System Bodyworker providing deep tissue massage, Rolfer, osteopath, neuromuscular therapist, acupuncturist, medical massage therapist, Feldenkrais, energy healing, tui na</p>	<p>Myofascial pain: palpable nodules, taut bands, localized pain, or referred pain due to overactive trigger points or fascia Soft tissue disorders</p>	<p>Hands-on identification of the pain through palpation or injection of local anesthesia or use of acupuncture needles to identify and then calm a particular point</p>	<p>Deep tissue massage, myofascial release, trigger point therapy, spray and stretch techniques, muscle relaxant herbs or medication, acupuncture</p>
<p>Acupuncture treatment of pain Physician acupuncturists, licensed acupuncturists</p>	<p>Acute and chronic pain: Localized pain: e.g. arthritis, bursitis, neck or low back pain, sports injuries, tennis elbow Myofascial pain: Regional myofascial pain syndrome, fibromyalgia; Neurogenic pain due to an irritated or pinched nerve: herniated disc, post herpetic neuralgia (shingles) Clinical syndromes: migraine, chronic daily headache, irritable bowel syndrome, premenstrual syndrome.</p>	<p>Physician acupuncturists use a conventional medical workup. All acupuncturists may utilize traditional oriental diagnostic techniques such as pulse and tongue diagnosis, general palpation to ascertain tissue turgor and vitality, abdominal palpation</p>	<p>Acupuncture therapy, acupressure, electrical stimulation including TENS, interferential and horizontal microcurrent, low-level laser acupuncture, ultrasound, frequency specific microcurrent (FSM), lymphatic massage, cupping, moxa, herbal therapy Address acupoints that reduce pain, increase neurotransmitters, reduce cortisol, induce sleep, and rebalance autonomic nervous system</p>
<p>Energy Medicine Providers of energy healing, healing touch, or reiki; craniosacral therapist, acupuncturist, qigong teacher</p>	<p>Bioenergetic imbalances Acute or chronic pain, connective tissue disorders, autoimmune conditions, stress-related issues such as anxiety and depression, chronic fatigue, central nervous system dysfunction, and PTSD</p>	<p>Assessing bioenergetic imbalances through palpable or visual evaluation of the body's aura and chakra system</p>	<p>Healing touch, acupuncture, craniosacral therapy; specific systems including those of Rosalyn Bruyere and Barbara Brennan</p>
<p>Body-Mind Therapies that combine touch and talk Somatic therapist, biofeedback provider, practitioners of Rosen Method, the Trager Approach, and Rubenfeld Synergy</p>	<p>Deep-seated tension resulting from physical or emotional trauma or post-traumatic stress, associated with physical or sexual abuse, injury, or war-time trauma that can result in somatized symptoms or hypervigilance May be associated with chronic stress, depression, anxiety, allodynia, gastrointestinal disorders or fibromyalgia</p>	<p>Increasing the patient's awareness of chronic tension in the body, associated with past trauma or stress; this may involve use of biofeedback or bodywork in combination with psychotherapy</p>	<p>Insight therapy, somatics, EMDR, systematic desensitization, neurofeedback, mindfulness-based stress reduction, meditative therapies</p>
<p>Mind-Body Medicine Psychologist, psychotherapist, psychiatrist, marriage and family counselor, life coach, trained chaplain, or spiritual counselor</p>	<p>Dysfunctional life patterns Chronic stress Low neurotransmitter levels reflected in symptoms such as depression, anxiety, or lack of drive</p>	<p>Understanding the patient from a psychological, social, or spiritual perspective; use of psychological evaluations</p>	<p>Insight therapy, cognitive therapy, guided imagery, or life coaching Support reconnection, interpersonally, spiritually, or with life purpose</p>
<p>Lifestyle Analysis Any of the practitioners above, as well as providers who offer biofeedback, industrial medicine, integrative medicine, naturopathy, integrative health coaching, holistic personal trainer</p>	<p>Chronic tension or pain due to repetitive strain, computer-stress, or other workplace injuries Poor posture, lack of exercise, stretching, or strengthening Poor nutrition or excessive weight gain; apnea or sleep debt</p>	<p>Patient awareness and education involving lifestyle, workstyle, nutrition, stress reduction, and exercise</p>	<p>Programs designed to support lifestyle change; health coaching</p>