

WHAT IS CHRONIC PAIN?

The Mind-Body Connection

Introduction

The body and brain are connected and impact how we experience pain.

Videos

[Tame The Beast](#) — Lorimer Moseley (5min)



[Understanding Pain in less than 5 minutes, and what to do about it!](#) — Live Active Chiropractors
An introduction to Pain (5 min)

[Low Back Pain](#) —Dr. Mike Evans (11 min)

[Understanding Pain: Brainman Chooses](#) —(3 min)

Reading

[Pain Fundamentals](#) - Greg Lehman, PT
Read through the workbook and think about the questions as you go. This is a great resource to print and keep as you learn more about pain.



Acute vs. Chronic pain – See page 2

Homework

Wake up the Mind-Body Connection.

This is an 15 minute activity to help focus on connecting the brain and body. Connecting our mind and body can help us understand how our body reacts to when a pain alarm goes off. Find a quiet place to try this activity.



[Body Scan Activity](#)



Optional Resources

[Some Frequently Asked Questions about Pain](#)—Tame the Beast



[How does your brain respond to pain?](#) —Karen D. Davis, Ted Ed (5min)



[Why Things Hurt](#) — Lorimer Moseley TEDxAdelaide (15min)

Key Points

1. Our brain's job is to protect us.
2. When our brain detects a threat or potential threat, it tries to protect us with pain.
3. Our brain's threat detector becomes more sensitive the more negative experiences we have.
4. Pain is based on our perception of threat and our brain considers many factors when trying to decide what is a threat.
5. Pain is only 1 protective response. The other ones include: fatigue, stiffness, and changes in the way we move (example: limping).
6. Pain does not always mean damage. Chronic pain is more due to a sensitive threat detectors in the brain and body.

Acute vs. Chronic Pain

	Acute	Chronic
Duration	Time Limited	Lasts more than 3-6 months
Intensity	Often Intense	Varies in intensity from mild to severe
Location	One area of the body	One or multiple areas of the body
Function	Has survival value. Warns of danger and harm	Has NO survival value. No longer warns of immediate danger
Cause	Biological mechanisms of acute pain are quite well understood	Mechanisms of chronic pain are NOT well understood
Emotional Response	Associated with anxiety and fear	Chronic pain is a form of chronic stress
Treatment	Cure is common	Cure is NOT common
Role of activity and exercise	Rest is often best	Activity balanced with rest is best
Role of health care providers	Diagnose and treat	Teach and advise
Role of person with pain	Follow treatment advice	Partner in health care