Chronic Pain Self-Management Resources

This document provides a list of recommended chronic pain self-management resources that might be useful for primary care practices and their patients. Materials listed include three provider workbooks/manuals, along with resources your clinic might consider suggesting to patients. We provide a multitude of examples so you may identify the resources that are best for your practice.

Provider Resources

Managing Chronic Pain: A Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Approach Workbook, John Otis
This workbook helps providers walk a patient through 11 modules, each teaching a different skill for coping with chronic pain, such as stress management, sleep hygiene, relaxation therapy, and cognitive restructuring. It can be administered by the clinician or completed independently by the patient.
https://www.amazon.com/Managing-Chronic-Pain-Cognitive-Behavioral-Treatments/dp/0195329171

VA Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain Manual
This therapist manual was developed to support the VA Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain (CBT-CP) Training. Although written specifically for use with veterans, it is likely useful for anyone.
https://www.va.gov/PAINMANAGEMENT/docs/CBT-CP_Therapist_Manual.pdf

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for Chronic Pain Manual
This manual is based on the evidence-based treatment, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and includes strategies for mindfulness-based methods and other skills training.
https://www.div12.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ACT-for-Chronic-Pain-manual-McCracken.pdf

Patient Resources

As people learn best through different mediums, we include videos, books, short handouts, apps, and programs on this list.

Short Videos That Explain Chronic Pain

Tame the Beast — It's Time to Rethink Persistent Pain, Lorimer Moseley
This 5 minute animation explains how pain works, how our nervous system can learn pain, and explains new approaches to help reduce an individual's pain. (5 min)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikUzvSph7Z4&vl=en

Best Advice for People Taking Opioid Medication, Mike Evans
This 11-minute video is great for both patients and clinicians. It explains what chronic pain is, what we know about the benefits and risks of opioid medications, and how to avoid the pitfalls that can be associated with opioid treatment. (11 min)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Na2m7lx-hU

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Understanding Pain: What to Do About It in Less Than Five Minutes?
This easy to follow 5 minute video about chronic pain helps individuals understand what current research has been saying about chronic pain - that it's not a joint or muscle problem, rather a 're-wiring' of the brain's perception of itself. (5 min)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_3phB93rvI

Chronic Pain Self-Management Books

The Opioid-Free Pain Relief Kit: 10 Simple Steps to Ease Your Pain, Beth Darnall
This workbook offers a road map and skills to help reduce chronic pain, so individuals with chronic pain need less medication.
https://www.amazon.com/Opioid-Free-Pain-Relief-Kit-Simple/dp/1936693984/

Less Pain, Fewer Pills: Avoid the Dangers of Prescription Opioids and Gain Control over Chronic Pain, Beth Darnall
This book helps individuals build a personalized Empowerment Program to reduce pain. It includes downloadable charts and journals, and teaches techniques to overcome catastrophizing - a factor in the experience of pain intensity and duration.
https://www.amazon.com/Less-Pain-Fewer-Pills-Prescription/dp/1936693585

Chronic Pain Books for Patients Who Want to Dig a Bit Deeper

Managing Pain Before It Manages You, Margaret Caudill
This book guides individuals with chronic pain to: identify what increases and decreases symptoms; reduce pain and emotional distress; make informed decisions about medications and nutritional therapies; benefit from relaxation, meditation, and gentle exercise; communicate effectively about pain; develop coping and problem solving skills; and set and meet goals.
https://www.amazon.com/Managing-Pain-Before-Manages-Fourth/dp/1462522777

Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness, Jon Kabat-Zinn
This book shows individuals how to use mind-body approaches to counteract stress, establish greater balance of body and mind, and stimulate well-being and healing. Individuals can learn to manage chronic pain, promote optimal healing, reduce anxiety and feelings of panic, and improve the overall quality of life, relationships, and social networks.
https://www.amazon.com/Full-Catastrophe-Living-Revised-Illness/dp/0345536932

Unlearn Your Pain, Howard Schubiner
This book demonstrates that the underlying reason for much chronic pain is nerve sensitization and learned nerve pathways, rather than actual tissue destruction. This book helps individuals determine if they have this syndrome and learn how to overcome it.
https://www.amazon.com/Unlearn-Your-Pain-third-Keller/dp/0984336745

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STOMP Pain Management Guide: Structuring Your Own Management of Pain, Swedish Medical Center
This book discusses topics that affect pain perception. Chapters include tools on sleep and pain, calming the nervous system, relationships and hobbies, caring for your body, complementary therapies, medications, and the role of procedures and surgery.
www.swedish.org/services/pain-services/pain-management-guide

Books on Mindfulness Self-Management Strategies

Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life, Jon Kabat-Zinn
This book maps a simple path for cultivating mindfulness. It is an approachable book for those coming to mindfulness meditation for the first time.
https://www.amazon.com/Wherever-You-There-Are-Mindfulness/dp/1401307787

Mindfulness: An Eight Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World, Mark Williams & Danny Penman
Based on the techniques of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, this book teaches a set of simple practices to help with anxiety, stress, exhaustion, and unhappiness.
https://www.amazon.com/Mindfulness-Eight-Week-Finding-Peace-Frantic/dp/1609618955

Real Happiness: The Power of Meditation: A 28-Day Program, Sharon Salzberg
This book teaches the basics of meditation, from posture and breathing to the finer points of calming the mind, distraction, and dealing with specific problems.
https://www.amazon.com/Real-Happiness-Meditation-28-Day-Program/dp/0761159258

Short Handouts on Self-Management Strategies

Activity pacing handouts from the Veteran's Administration
Activity pacing can help a patient avoid the pain cycle by developing an activity-rest cycle, alternating planned periods of activity with regular rest periods. (4 pages)
http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/coe/cesamh/docs/Activity_Pacing-patients.pdf

UC Davis Medical Center Pain Self-Management Strategies
This booklet provides 11 strategies for chronic pain self-management and a worksheet to develop a Self-Management Action Plan. (16 pages)
https://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/nursing/Research/INQRI_Grant/Long-Term%20Non-Surgery%20Pain%20Management%20Strategies%20Booklet%20WebFINAL082311.pdf

Helpful Apps for Supporting Self-Management Strategies

PTSD Coach
PTSD Coach assists individuals with chronic pain who experienced trauma to learn about, track, and manage symptoms.
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile/ptsdcoach_app.asp

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Breathe2Relax
This stress management app trains on the "belly breathing" technique. It provides breathing exercises to learn and practice the breathing technique.
https://apps.apple.com/us/app/breathe2relax/id425720246

Headspace: Meditation
The Basics course of this app is free and teaches the fundamental techniques of meditation and mindfulness.
https://www.headspace.com/headspace-meditation-app

Stop Breathe Think
This app supports you with checking in with your emotions, and then recommends short, guided meditations, yoga, and acupressure videos.
https://www.stopbreathethink.com/

The Three Minute Breathing Space
This 3-minute practice is great to use in the middle of the day, with stressful situations as they arise, and when you don't have time for a more formal, extended relaxation session. Available as a handout, app, and recording.
http://franticworld.com/the-three-minute-breathing-space-meditation-is-now-free-to-download/

Programs

Stanford Model / Chronic Pain Self-Management Program
A community-based intervention delivered once a week for six weeks. Usually free or low-cost to participate. Group sessions last 6 weeks with 2 hours of group sessions per week.
http://www.eblcprograms.org/evidence-based/map-of-programs

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Course
This is an 8-week course on mindfulness practice and stress reduction developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn. Information and schedule/locations:
https://mindfulnessnorthwest.com/MBSR

FibroGuide
FibroGuide is an online symptom management program for people living with fibromyalgia.
https://fibroguide.med.umich.edu

American Chronic Pain Association
Use this link to locate a nearby support group:
https://www.theacpa.org/support-groups

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