

Wise & Well

SUMMER 2020 | wpshealth.com



Dealing with **CHRONIC PAIN**

Page 2

LOW-IMPACT WORKOUTS THAT DO A BODY GOOD

Page 3

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN SELECTING A **CHIROPRACTOR**

Page 4

HOW TO **COMMUNICATE** WITH YOUR **DOCTOR**

Page 6



Proud partner of the
Milwaukee Brewers™

Dealing with **CHRONIC PAIN**

It can be difficult getting through your day when you're really hurting. Recovering from a surgery or a broken bone. Throwing out your back. Dealing with a severe headache. We've all been there.

Now imagine dealing with that pain every day.

It can be constant, like arthritis or a bad back. Or it can be recurring, like a migraine headache. Either way, suffering chronic pain can be like enduring slow torture.

As if that weren't enough to bear, chronic pain is linked to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. The American Psychological Association recommends managing stress through eating healthy, sleeping well, and engaging in approved physical activity. Find activities you enjoy and avoid isolation by staying engaged with family and friends. And consult a professional to help you cope with anxiety and depression.

There are therapies that can help manage some types of chronic pain, including acupuncture, physical therapy, biofeedback, and hypnosis.

Depending on the cause and the severity of the pain, there are over-the-counter and prescription drugs that can help alleviate the pain. Some of the options:

- » **Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, also known as NSAIDs**
 - Examples: Advil, Motrin IB, Aleve
 - Used to treat: Mild to moderate pain accompanied by swelling and inflammation, such as arthritis, muscle sprains, strains, and menstrual cramps
- » **Acetaminophen**
 - Example: Tylenol
 - Used to treat: Mild to moderate pain, including skin injuries, headaches, arthritis, and back pain

Organizations like the **American Chronic Pain Association** have support groups and other resources that can help you find some relief from your physical and mental symptoms.

- » **COX-2 inhibitors**
 - Example: Celebrex
 - Used to treat: Arthritis, muscle sprains, and other injuries; often combined with NSAIDs to limit side effects, such as stomach pain and bleeding
- » **Antidepressants and anti-seizure medications**
 - Examples: Nortriptyline, gabapentin
 - Used to treat: Back pain, fibromyalgia, diabetic nerve pain
- » **Opioids**
 - Examples: Hydrocodone, fentanyl, OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin
 - Used to treat: Acute pain from traumatic injuries such as broken bones or surgeries
 - NOTE: Opioids are highly addictive and more than 20% of patients prescribed opioids misuse them

Wise&Well

Ryan Kanable, Managing Editor

Wise & Well is published by WPS Health Insurance. This material is not intended as medical advice. Talk with your doctor about this or any other subjects pertinent to your health. See your summary of benefits for covered services.

Green Bay Packers and Milwaukee Brewers™ partnerships are paid endorsements.

Low-Impact Workouts

THAT DO A BODY GOOD

Low-impact workouts have exploded in popularity as people discover they can get many of the benefits of higher-impact exercise without the wear and tear on their bodies.

Low-impact exercise usually includes anything you can do while still keeping one foot in contact with the ground. It may be your best option if you are:

- » Coping with arthritis or osteoporosis
- » Overweight
- » Recovering from injuries
- » Pregnant
- » Just getting started

But even if you're competing in the Olympic decathlon or Ironman Triathlon, low-impact exercises can be a nice complement to your fitness regimen. Here are some ideas to get you started. (Note: Always consult with your physician before beginning any workout program.)

Mindful movement. Yoga, tai chi, and Pilates are terrific for physical and mental well-being.

Swimming/water aerobics. Water eases stress on the joints and lets you do intense or relaxed workouts.

Weight training. Working with light weights is recommended for most people to build muscle strength.

Fitness machines. Treadmills, stationary bikes, ellipticals, and rowing machines offer aerobic and strength training options.

Walking. All you need are some good shoes to exercise and enjoy Mother Nature.

Sources:

Very Well Fit
Your Health Matters
Self

Don't Miss Our Blog!

Each month, you can find new blog posts on health insurance and wellness topics to help boost your knowledge. You'll find answers to common questions, tips for healthy living, some interesting stories, and more. Take a look today!



wpshealthblog.com



ACHING BACK?

What to Look for When Selecting a Chiropractor

Chiropractic care is considered safe when it's done by a trained professional. It can be an effective way to treat back pain, neck pain, or headaches.

There are chiropractic skeptics, and there have been enough instances of fraud and abuse that the American Chiropractic Association addresses the subject on its website.

Here are some tips to help you select the right chiropractor:

Get a referral

There is no better way to ensure your chiropractor is qualified than to get a referral from your doctor. Recommendations from family and friends can also be helpful.

Check your Medicare coverage

Medicare covers basic chiropractic care, according to medicare.gov, but you should check if your chiropractor is recommending other types of care, such as massage or X-rays, which may not be covered.

Check credentials

Once you have a promising candidate or two, check their credentials. Your state's chiropractic licensing board is a

good place to start. Also, if you do some research, you may be able to find out more about your condition. See if the chiropractors you are considering have experience treating it.

Schedule a visit

It can be helpful to schedule a preliminary visit. You want to make sure you feel comfortable with your chiropractor. He or she may also be able to outline potential treatment options.

Look for red flags

There are signs you may want to consider switching chiropractors, some of which may not be apparent until after you begin care:

- A hard sell for long-term treatment packages, preventive care, or supplements
- Unsubstantiated claims of chiropractic's benefits, such as eliminating the need for vaccines
- Manipulations of body parts not showing symptoms
- Treatment that continues after symptoms are gone

If you need to see a chiropractor, make sure to do a little legwork first. Your neck and back will thank you.



Join Our Facebook Group

You're invited to join our **WPS Medicare Solutions Community!** This private group is a trusted place where you can explore helpful tools, like enrollment checklists and "how to" videos, and engage with others online.

Visit facebook.com/groups/WPScares or search "WPS Cares" on Facebook. Then, click the **+ Join Group** button. We will review your request to join within 48 hours. You don't need to be a current WPS customer to participate.

WPS Earns Energy Efficiency Excellence Award

Focus on Energy in Wisconsin selected WPS Health Solutions as one of 13 winners of the Energy Efficiency Excellence Award for 2020. The announcement, which coincided with Earth Day on April 22, recognized WPS' commitment to improving the energy efficiency and sustainability of operations.

Since 2017, WPS has completed more than 25 major energy-efficiency initiatives. The list includes major LED lighting retrofits; optimization of air handlers and associated support equipment; optimization of data center climate controls; and converting a steam heating system to a high-efficiency hot water system.

The statewide Focus on Energy program worked with its partner utilities to choose the winners.



Make a new friend through our **WPS Pen Pal** program

Do your weeks seem long, with little to break up the days?

Do something about it!

Sign up for the **WPS Pen Pal** program and chat it up with a WPS employee. It's always nice to make new friends, and we'd like to get to know you better!

Take the first step right now and send us a letter expressing your interest. From there, we'll connect you with a WPS employee who will correspond with you. You can get to know each other at your own pace.

WRITE TO:

- » WPS Health Insurance
Attn: MMS—Pen Pal
1717 W. Broadway, P.O. Box 8190
Madison, WI 53708-8190

What are you waiting for? Pick up your pen and get involved. We hope to hear from you soon!



How to **Communicate** with Your **Doctor**

Going to a doctor can be intimidating, especially if you suspect—or know—you're dealing with a serious health issue.

You need to be able to give your doctor the information necessary to make the right diagnosis and craft the right treatment plan. And you need to be able to understand that plan to maximize its effectiveness.

Improving doctor-patient communication can go a long way toward ensuring you get the best health care possible. Here are some steps you can take.

Write it down

Once your appointment begins, it's easy to get caught up in the moment. Make a list of questions you have for your doctor and take it in to the exam room. Knowing that doctors can be in a rush, ask the most important questions first in case you run out of time.

When your doctor is speaking, take notes if it helps you remember. For some patients, it's helpful to keep all important details in a health journal, so you have everything right at your fingertips. Some doctors will let you take audio recordings of appointments to help ensure accuracy.

Be honest

Don't be embarrassed about your symptoms or concerns. The only way a doctor can fully address them is if you tell the truth. And if you don't understand something your doctor says, don't be afraid to speak up. You need to be armed with as much information as possible. A good way to go about this is "mirroring," or repeating what you doctor has said to make sure you understand it.

Don't go it alone

If possible, take a trusted friend or relative into the appointment. Having somebody you trust with you can help you remember details and ask questions, not to mention lend moral support.

Know the next steps

You don't want to leave the doctor's office without a clear understanding of what the plan is. If you're being prescribed medication, understand dosages and instructions. Decide what follow-up appointments may be needed, whether it's to see the same provider, get referred to another, or schedule tests or lab work.

Sources:

Johns Hopkins Medicine
AARP
Very Well Health
Family Caregiver Alliance
cancercares.org



Connect with Us!

Get instant access to health, wellness, and health insurance coverage tips.



facebook.com/wpshealth



[@wpshealth](https://twitter.com/wpshealth)



wpshealthblog.com



Are You Receiving Our E-newsletter?

About every other month, we send an e-newsletter to our WPS Medicare supplement insurance customers who have our base plan. If you have a base plan, but don't receive this valuable resource, all you have to do is send us your email address. Email us at wpsmedsup@wpsic.com and ask to be put on our mailing list. The e-newsletter is not available to customers with one of our cost-sharing plans.

WISE&WELL WORD SEARCH

J S L U U W W O S D S O I P B
 B A U V A C A T I O N H S I C
 S O H M D H R T S H H A W C A
 D U A W M R J H E T U X I N M
 P G N T J E S O Y R U E M I P
 F T G S I A R U B S M O C C F
 Q L G D C N G B N I D E R H I
 A Q O S E R G R C S K S L S R
 M R L W F Q E E S A H I P O E
 S P F E E A K E A T M I N S N
 G R I L L R I R N D B P N G D
 U M P I E O S R D B E P I E E
 L E O V D B A S E B A L L N E
 L S O F I S H I N G C R A Q G
 E S L Y T S P C Z U H I I A H

WORD LIST

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| BASEBALL | GOLF |
| BEACH | PICNIC |
| BIKING | POOL |
| BOATING | SAND |
| CAMPFIRE | SUMMER |
| CAMPING | SUNSCREEN |
| FAIR | SUNSHINE |
| FISHING | SWIM |
| FLOWERS | VACATION |
| GRILL | WATERMELON |



“It’s just been a first-class company to deal with, and it’s no hassle. And that’s what I like the best.”

—Tom

Customer since 2009



Health insurance partner of
the **Green Bay Packers**

©2020 Wisconsin Physicians Service
Insurance Corporation.
All rights reserved.
JO17317 34529-100-2006

Wise&Well

SUMMER 2020 | wpshealth.com

- > **Page 2: Dealing with Chronic Pain**
- > **Page 3: Low-Impact Workouts That Do a Body Good**
- > **Page 4: What to Look for When Selecting a Chiropractor**
- > **Page 6: How to Communicate with Your Doctor**



Sign Up for Email Alerts from WPS

Subscribe for news and information from WPS Health Insurance about COVID-19 and other important health topics. Your email address is safe with us—we don't share it with anyone else! Email alerts are a great way to stay informed and in touch with WPS. Visit our webpage at wps.health/covid19 to sign up today.