An Introduction to Chronic Pain
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What is Chronic Pain?

The term “chronic pain” is typically used to describe pain that lasts more than three months. It can be continuous or intermittent, meaning that it does not have to be constant in order to be considered “chronic.” Millions of Canadians suffer from chronic pain daily and have often dealt with it for long periods of time without adequate relief. Chronic pain can have many causes, including injuries and degenerative medical conditions. Treatment can include medications, non-invasive treatments and psychological support.

Who Does it Affect?

Although senior citizens are often the hardest hit, anyone can suffer from chronic pain. When not brought on by age, chronic pain also affects those who suffer from the following conditions:

- Joint Pain
- Neck Pain
- Back Pain
- Chronic Headaches
- Herniated Discs
- Facial Pain (including Trigeminal Neuralgia)
- Degenerative Disc Disease
- Muscle and Fibromyalgia Pain
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS)
- Arthritic Pain
- Whiplash Injuries
Common Areas It Affects

Chronic pain can affect multiple areas of the body such as the head, neck, shoulders, back, legs, and joints.

THE BACK
The most common area of back pain is the lumbar spine. This is because there is a large and complex grouping of nerves, bones, muscles, tendons, and discs in this area of the back. Lumbar spine pain causes discomfort and can affect mobility. It can indicate inflammation or irritation in the region, and cause distress that is intermittent or continuous. There are a variety of causes for chronic back pain including those related to physical activity such as sports or manual labour. Back pain can be the result of a muscle strain or a condition like degenerative disc disease. The pain can vary from sharp and piercing to a tingling or burning sensation. It is important to understand the cause of your back pain in order to discuss the available treatment options.

THE NECK
Chronic neck pain can range from mild to unbearable, and can be caused by something as simple as a muscle spasm. Any disorder which affects the bones and muscle tissue in the neck, as well as any blunt trauma, can cause chronic neck pain. Other causes include physical strains like pulling a muscle, or neck injuries like a pinched nerve or whiplash. Chronic neck pain can be occasional or constant, and can seriously affect a patient’s ability to live an active lifestyle, as movement can aggravate the pain. Neck pain is often characterised by stiffness, dull aches, and soreness.

THE HEAD
By definition, chronic daily headaches occur 15 days or more per month, for at least three months. They can be among the most incapacitating types of headache due to their persistence. These headaches can affect any part of the head and symptoms include, but are not limited to: throbbing pain, pressure on the temples, and a stinging or burning sensation behind the eyes. Diagnosing chronic headaches can be difficult because, unless the patient suffers from a condition or disorder, there may be no clear underlying cause. Fortunately, there are various treatment options available to help decrease their occurrence and severity.
Available Treatment Options

There are various treatment options available for someone who suffers from chronic pain. A diagnosis is necessary in order to know how to proceed. Options include invasive and non-invasive procedures, and medication. At the Rothbart Centre, we focus on non-invasive procedures to diagnose and treat our patients such as:

**FLUOROSCOPY**
Fluoroscopy-guided procedures use x-ray imaging to allow the doctor to see real-time images of the patient’s anatomy while performing procedures.

**ULTRASOUND**
Using diagnostic ultrasound to guide chronic pain treatment procedures can reduce complications and result in higher success rates.

**NERVE BLOCKS**
Nerve blocks can relieve pain in a wide variety of areas. A nerve block is the injection of a local anesthetic into the tissues surrounding a nerve. It relieves pain by interrupting the pain signals that would otherwise be sent to your brain.

**EPIDURAL STEROID INJECTIONS**
Epidural steroid injections are a common treatment for many forms of back and leg pain, including sciatica.

**RADIOFREQUENCY NEUROLYSIS (RHIZOLYSIS)**
Radiofrequency (RF) neurolysis utilizes heat to destroy selected nerve fibers, effectively blocking pain signals to the brain. RF can reduce or eliminate various types of pain, particularly neck and back pain.

**LIDOCAINE INFUSIONS**
Lidocaine infusions are used to treat fibromyalgia and neuropathic pain disorders. Infusions are performed intravenously to calm nerves and provide relief from chronic pain.

**COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY**
Cognitive behavioral therapy can be very effective in helping patients deal with their chronic pain symptoms. A preferred mode of treatment is to eliminate the source of the pain. Studies have shown that when pain is relieved, patients revert to their normal psychological profile. Since complete pain relief is not always possible, psychotherapy is an important part of helping patients deal with their chronic pain symptoms.

**PAIN MEDICATION THERAPY**
Pain medication therapy may be prescribed when treatment or surgery is not an option or when treatment or surgery provides insufficient relief of chronic pain. The types of medications prescribed may include anti-inflammatory medications, antidepressants, and anticonvulsants. When necessary, analgesics (narcotics) may be prescribed under strict monitoring and control.
About the Rothbart Centre

Since 1987, the Toronto-based Rothbart Centre for Pain Care has specialized in the management and treatment of chronic pain. We see over 30,000 patient visits per year and provide pain care for patients with chronic pain of the head, neck, and back. Our caring doctors specialize in interventional treatments and minimally invasive techniques that can offer relief to patients suffering from everything from chronic headaches to degenerative disc disease. We offer advanced solutions to achieve the best outcomes for chronic pain patients so that they can live healthier, happier and more successful lives.

Many patients find relief at the Rothbart Centre after years of unsuccessful treatment. We offer an experienced team of pain management physicians and staff to support our patients on their path to wellness. Our specialty pain clinic was designed with patient needs in mind. Our team develops an individualized pain treatment program to support pain relief through a multidisciplinary approach. Our team includes over 25 physicians, anesthesiologists, and nurses, as well as several specialists trained and certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Our Mission Statement

The physicians and staff of the Rothbart Centre for Pain Care are dedicated to providing first-rate pain management care to all patients. We vow to demonstrate the highest standards of patient-centered care and remain committed to safeguarding our patients, now and in the future.

Our Promises:

• To provide high quality diagnostic and treatment services.
• To ensure ethical and honest treatment and the use of all possible resources.
• To treat each patient with respect.
• To maintain best practices in cleanliness, hygiene and infection control.
• To ensure complete confidentiality of medical records.
Our Leadership Team

Peter J. Rothbart, MD, FCRP(c), Founder & Medical Director
Dr. Peter Rothbart founded the Rothbart Centre in 1987, using his expertise in pain management to help Ontarians find relief from chronic pain. Dr. Rothbart has more than 30 years of practice experience in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. He is a member of the Canadian and Ontario Medical Associations, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. He is a diplomate of the American Academy of Pain Management and the American Board of Pain Medicine.

Dr. Rothbart has been recognized with an Award of Excellence by the Canadian Academy of Pain Management and served many years as the chairman of the Chronic Pain Section of the Ontario Medical Association. Dr. Rothbart is also a past president of the North American Cervicogenic Headache Society.

Faisal Motlani, MD, DABA
Dr. Motlani is board-certified in anesthesiology and interventional pain management by the American Board of Anesthesiology. He is proficient in spinal cord stimulation techniques as well as intrathecal pump therapy. He is a member of the American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians, the American Society of Anesthesiologists, and the American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Management. Dr. Motlani joined the Rothbart Centre in 2012.

Vladimir Djuric, MD, AAPM&R
Dr. Djuric is board-certified in both Pain Medicine and Physical Medicine. He is also a certified Independent Medical Examiner. He completed his residency at Ohio State University Hospital and a fellowship in Musculoskeletal and Sports Medicine at Louisiana State University Medical Center. There he trained with world renowned experts in Spine Medicine. He has recently been appointed Clinical Assistant Professor at McMaster University, and as a Clinical Instructor at the Ohio State University Hospital. Dr. Djuric is a frequent guest lecturer on topics including spinal pain, fibromyalgia and chronic pain syndrome. He joined the Rothbart Centre in 2012.

Sue-Ellen Solger, RPN
Sue-Ellen received her Registered Practical Nursing Certification from Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay, Ontario. Her experience includes practicing in a hospital and clinic setting, as well having served as an International Flight Nurse. Leading the clinic as Nurse Manager since 2010, Sue-Ellen brings on board over 28 years of expertise in fields as diverse as pediatrics, surgery, emergency medicine and geriatrics.

Jessica Redfield, Chief Administrative Officer
Jessica joined the Rothbart Centre as our Chief Administrative Officer in 2002. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts in English and History from the University of Toronto. Before joining the Rothbart Centre, she held various IT positions, including as an instructor at the Institute for Computer Studies. Jessica is a member of the Rothbart Centre Joint Health and Safety Committee.
The Rothbart Centre for Pain Care is located at 4646 Dufferin St, Unit #9 in North York. If you are suffering from chronic pain, speak to your doctor about a referral to our clinic, or allow us to assist you by visiting our website and requesting a consultation.