



Arthritis-Chronic Pain and Mental Health

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Pain can affect everyone and the activities of daily living. Long term pain, also called chronic pain is the most common of disabilities, with nearly 19 million Americans reporting activity limitations.

What you should know about Arthritis and Chronic Pain?

- Chronic pain and depression commonly go hand in hand; it can be difficult to separate the two into distinct illnesses.
- Being in pain increases anxiety, which adds to feelings of depression and hopelessness.
- Arthritis, often accompanied by chronic pain, is the nation's most common cause of disability; nearly 21 million U.S. adults report activity limitations because of arthritis each year.
- Arthritis comprises more than 100 different rheumatic diseases and conditions, the most common of which is osteoarthritis. Other forms of arthritis include rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, fibromyalgia, and gout.

Among people 65 years old or older in Arizona, 56% have some form of arthritis

Symptoms of Chronic Pain

- Depression
- Insomnia or Hypersomnia
- Anxiety
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Significant weight loss or gain

Symptoms of Arthritis

- Inflammation of the joints from arthritis is characterized by joint pain, stiffness, swelling, redness, and warmth
- Symptoms in some patients with certain forms of arthritis can also include fever, gland swelling, weight loss, fatigue, feeling unwell, and even symptoms from abnormalities of organs such as the lungs, heart, or kidneys

Who is affected by Arthritis and Chronic Pain?

- Everyone, although common among adults age 65 or older
- More common among women than men in every age group, and it affects members of all racial and ethnic groups



TIPS ON MANAGING CHRONIC PAIN

- ✓ **Be physically active!**
Swimming has been shown to have significant benefits, including reducing pain and improving physical function, mental health, and quality of life.
- ✓ **Maintain a healthy weight and protect your joints.**
- ✓ **Consult a physician.**
Early diagnosis and appropriate management are especially important.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Visit these online tools to find out more:

- ▶ www.arthritis.org
- ▶ www.theacpa.org
- ▶ www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/arthritis.htm

Ask your behavioral health/medical provider:

1. Is my chronic pain related to a weight condition?
2. Do I need an X-ray, MRI or CT scan to find out what is causing my pain?
3. Is my arthritis chronic?
4. Are there things I can do to manage my pain?
5. Can I take anti-inflammatory drugs to reduce the pain, swelling and stiffness in my joints?
6. Should I be on prednisone or acetaminophen?

Consulting with a physician is important so you can learn about techniques that may help you manage your pain.



Division of Behavioral Health Services

This flyer and related materials can be found online at:
www.azdhs.gov/bhs/qhi/