

BOOK REVIEW

Pain Free 1-2-3!

A PROVEN PROGRAM TO GET PATIENTS PAIN FREE!

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INTRODUCTION

I can summarize what I was taught about chronic pain in medical school in two sentences. Use Tylenol or SSRI (Motrin-like) medications. If the patient has cancer, you can use narcotics if you have to. It is no surprise then that pain patients flock to alternative therapists so they can get relief. **Fortunately, most chronic pain can now be effectively treated!**

PAIN IS NOT THE ENEMY!

Pain is often simply an important indicator of underlying problems that need to be taken care of. In fact, pain can be viewed as the red, flashing, and warning light on your dashboard telling you that something urgently needs attention.

Because of this, although chronic pain can be devastating, it serves a critical function. It tells you when you need to avoid something (or some activity) or pay attention to something so that you do not cause damage to your self. In addition, it tells you when your body is not getting something that it needs (e.g.—sleep, nutrients, oxygen, etc.).

So we know that pain is not the enemy—it is an important protective system. To simply mask the pain with medication would be like covering up the “low oil” warning light on your dashboard because it was annoying you. Therefore, **in addition to teaching you how to turn off the pain signal, we will also help you to understand what the pain is trying to tell you that your body needs. When these are addressed, the pain usually goes away!** While the underlying problems that need attention are being addressed, it is also very important to turn off/mask pain so that the patient is comfortable.

SO HOW DO I TURN OFF THE PAIN SIGNAL?

You turn off the pain by giving the patient’s body what it needs, **eliminating unhealthy sensitivity reactions, and removing substances that are damaging or toxic to their body.** For example, one of the most common types of pain is myofascial (e.g.—muscle) pain. Although we might think that muscles will go limp or loose if they do not have what they

require, consider rigor mortis. When someone dies and the muscles are not getting what they need, they do not get loose—in fact they become stiff as a board. Using fibromyalgia as a model for widespread myofascial pain, our research team did a randomized double-blind placebo-controlled study **treating sleep, hormonal deficiencies, infections and nutritional deficiencies.**(1) The average improvement in quality of life was 90 percent, and pain decreased by over 50 percent on average. (P<.0001 vs. placebo for all 4 outcome measures). Most of the benefit was seen by 100 days into treatment. The majority of patients no longer even qualified for the diagnosis of fibromyalgia by that time! In addition, an editorial in the Journal of the American Academy of Pain Management noted that our treatment protocol was an “excellent and highly effective part of the standard of practice for the treatment of fibromyalgia and myofascial pain syndrome”. The full text of our study and the editorial can be seen at www.vitality101.com. You’ll be amazed how even pain that has lasted decades can go away quickly when these problems are taken care of.

The wonderful thing about Comprehensive Medicine, which combines holistic and pharmaceutical treatments, is that you have a full tool kit to deal with these problems. Otherwise, it’s like going into a shoe store and having only 1 or 2 pairs of shoes to try on. Fortunately, using comprehensive Medicine there are literally many dozens of both natural and prescription treatments to try, and when one doesn’t eliminate the pain, the others usually will. Almost every one can find “a shoe that fits” so that they can be pain free and get their life and health back!

SO HOW DO I TREAT THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS CAUSING THE PAIN?

There are usually four key areas that need to be treated to eliminate muscle/myofascial pain. It helps to remember the acronym “S. H. I. N.”. This stands for Sleep, **H**ormonal support, treating **I**nfections, and **N**utritional support. We will review each of these areas and how to treat them. Neuropathic pain also often responds well to metabolic support as well.

It is not just important to treat the deficiencies and infections, but also the body’s reaction to these. NAET® is the most developed technique currently available for

this, putting it in a uniquely powerful position in the field of pain management! For all the areas discussed below, be sure the patients are cleared, and then add support as needed.

Let’s review the four key problems that pain is often trying to alert us about:

1-Nutritional support- First you need to give the body the nutritional building blocks it needs to heal. Otherwise, it cannot even begin to get well. This is critical as pain patients are often deficient in numerous nutrients. The most important nutrients include: a) vitamins (especially B Vitamins), antioxidants and their precursors/cofactors b) Minerals — especially magnesium, zinc, iron, and selenium. c) Essential fatty acids and d) amino acids (proteins). There is a product that contains most of the needed nutrients (except for calcium, iron and essential fatty acids) in one scoop of a good tasting powder and one capsule taken daily. It is called the Energy Revitalization System (from Integrative Therapeutics) and supplies an excellent, easy and affordable foundation for nutritional support for almost everyone — including those with pain. We have even seen patients’ pain go away simply with this nutritional support. It is easy to use and literally replaces the need for 35 capsules of nutritional supplements a day!

Next, although the powder has most of what a body needs, joints require other specific nutrients for healing in addition to what’s in the vitamin powder. So for arthritis, get Glucosamine **Sulfate** (500 mg 3 x day) and consider MSM (2-3 grams a day for 2-5 months).

Glucosamine sulfate is a cartilage building compound that has been found to be helpful in arthritis in many studies. It is a major component of the cartilage that is damaged in arthritic joints. Glucosamine taken by mouth is incorporated in the molecules that make up this cartilage likely contributing to the healing of arthritis. I recommend the sulfate form (as opposed to Glucosamine hydrochloride), as the sulfate can also help with wound/joint healing.

Unlike aspirin/NSAIDS that do not slow down destruction of joints in arthritis, Glucosamine has been shown to actually help stabilize and often heal the joints on x-ray! Doses of less than 1000 mg a day do not affect symptoms, and the standard dose is 500 mg 3

times a day. It can also be taken as 1500 mg once a day, and had no more side effects than placebo.(2)

SAM-e is a nutrient that improves patients' arthritis as effectively as anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDS).(3) Unfortunately, it is quite expensive. Interestingly, using the nutrients found in the Energy Revitalization System vitamin powder resulted in increased blood levels of SAM-e similar to those found by taking 400-800 milligrams daily.

2-Sleep-Because sleep is dependent on healthy hypothalamic function and pain also interferes with sleep, pain patients frequently have insomnia- which is often profound. The body's repair cycle occurs during sleep and you need 8-9 hours of sleep a night for optimal healing. The good news is that many natural remedies that are very effective for sleep also directly help pain. My favorites are:

Wild Lettuce—Traditionally, wild lettuce has been found to be wonderful for insomnia, headaches, and muscle and joint pain.

Jamaican Dogwood—The extract acts as a muscle relaxant and also helps people to fall asleep while calming them (4). According to tradition, Jamaican Dogwood used to be used by Jamaican fishermen. Large amounts were thrown in the water. The fish would then fall asleep and be easy to net!

Hops-has long history of being used as a mild sedative for anxiety and insomnia and a study using 120 mg of hops combined with 500 mg of valerian showed an improvement in insomnia with effectiveness similar to Valium family medications. It is considered to be very safe (5).

Passion flower (Passiflora)—this excellent herb is used throughout South America as a calming agent—even being present in sodas. In fact, when one is anxious, it is not uncommon for their friends to tell them “why don't you go get a passion flower drink”.

A number of studies support its have a calming effect. Early data also suggests that it may increase men's libidos. (6) Passionflower has other pain management benefits as well. In one animal study, it was shown that it decreases morphine tolerance and withdrawal (improving morphine's effectiveness and safety) (7)

Valerian—Valerian is commonly used as a steep remedy for insomnia. One placebo-controlled study showed that people taking valerian (400 mg of extract each night for two weeks) fell asleep quicker and had better sleep quality without next-day sedation. A number of other studies also show benefit including an improvement in deep sleep. A review of multiple studies found that “valerian is a safe herbal choice for the treatment of mild insomnia and has good tolerance...Most studies suggest that it is more effective when used continuously rather than as an acute sleep aid” (8).

Theanine-Theanine comes from green tea and has been shown to not just improve deep sleep but also help people maintain calm alertness during the day.

Because I have found all six of these herbals to be dramatically helpful in patients with disordered sleep, anxiety and/or chronic pain, I had them all combined in the **Revitalizing Sleep Formula** by Integrative Therapeutics. 1-4 capsules can be taken at bedtime to help sleep (or an hour before bedtime if the main problem is falling asleep). It can also be used during the day for anxiety and pain. Although the bottle says to take up to 4 capsules a day, one could take up to 8 capsules or more each day, as it is very safe. As I've noted earlier, 100% of my royalties for products I make go to charity and I take no money from companies whose products I recommend.

Other natural remedies that help sleep when taken at bedtime are magnesium glycinate (e.g. 100 to 300 milligrams-present in the vitamin powder), calcium (500 to 600 mg), 5-HTP (100-300mg), &/or melatonin (3/10th to 1mg) at bedtime. Because of the severity of their sleep disorder, it is not uncommon for pain patients who have fibromyalgia to need to take as many as six to eight different prescription and/or natural sleep treatments **simultaneously** to get 8 hours of sleep at night. The treatment protocol on my web site, mentioned earlier, contains a list of 25 natural and prescription sleep aids

that can help. After 6-18 months of feeling well, they can come off of most sleep (and other) treatments.

For pain patients to get well, it is critical that they take enough of the correct sleep treatments to get 8 to 9 hours sleep at night! Until one hundred years ago the average American slept nine hours a night!

3-Hormonal deficiencies- Most lab norms are based on healthy hypothalamic function- which is often not present in chronic pain. Hormonal status needs to be assessed by symptoms and physical exam, as well as with lab tests, and treated accordingly. It is usually necessary to treat with thyroid (Armour thyroid), adrenal (very low dose cortef or adrenal glandulars such as Adrenal Stress End from ITI or Adrenal glandulars from Standard Process, and DHEA), and natural ovarian and testicular hormones—despite normal blood tests(1). These **natural** hormones have been found to be fairly safe when used in low doses.

4-Opportunistic infections-Because of the immune dysfunction, many unusual infections (e.g.-fungal, parasitic, viral, mycoplasma, etc) are often present. Some need to be treated directly. Most clear without treatment when healthy immune function is reestablished. Clinically, we have found that **yeast overgrowth is the most important infection to treat for** (avoid sugar, and use Probiotic Pearls and Phytostan from ITI and nystatin plus Diflucan,—see treatment checklist).

WHAT IF PAIN PERSISTS AFTER TREATING THESE AREAS?

Although my new book “Pain-free 1-2-3!” goes into detail about how to effectively treat dozens of the most common types of pain (e.g. – headaches, back pain, arthritis, neuropathic pain, abdominal and pelvic pains, etc.) space does not allow detailed discussions of these in this article. As examples of available treatments, I would note that two studies have now shown (and clinical experience confirms) that over 70% of disc pain can be eliminated with IV colchicine 1 mg weekly for six weeks (be sure the IV does not infiltrate or the patient will have a nasty burn). In addition, the vast majority

of patients with carpal tunnel syndrome have their symptoms resolve after six weeks of treatment with Armour thyroid, vitamin B6 250 mg daily, and cock-up wrist splints worn while sleeping. I very rarely need to send these patients to surgery any more.

There are literally many dozens of natural and prescription therapies for persistent pain. For more information on over 250 natural and prescription treatments (by category), including dosing and other patient instructions, click on the “treatment protocol” link on my website (bottom left at www.vitality101.com). This will give you detailed information on the different therapies available for each problem and how to use them. You can also use the treatment protocol as a checklist for your patients. I will be happy to e-mail you a free file which also contains “short and long form” treatment protocols, patient questionnaires and many other time saving tools (e-mail me at endfatigue@aol.com to request it). Feel free to use them with your patients and to modify them. They will dramatically simplify, improve, and organize patient care and save you an enormous amount of time.

Let’s discuss some of the most effective natural pain treatments.

NATURAL THERAPIES

Many natural therapies can be very helpful for pain. My 3 favorite pain relieving herbals are willow bark, Boswellia, and tart cherry. All 3 of these can be found in combination in the **End Fatigue Pain Formula** by Integrative Therapeutics. For occasional pain, begin with 1-2 tabs up to 3 times a day as needed. For more severe or chronic pain problems, continue treatment until maximum benefit is achieved (~ 4-6 weeks) and then one can use the lowest effective dose. Let’s look at these 3 herbals.

Willow bark is the original source of aspirin, but when used as the entire herb it has been found to be **much** safer and quite effective. One active ingredient is salicin, and Willow bark has been shown to be effective in both osteoarthritis and back pain. Like aspirin and Celebrex, it acts as a COX (Cyclooxygenase enzyme) inhibitor, decreasing inflammation. There are clearly a combination of other factors in willow bark that markedly enhance its effectiveness and safety –

which can be a major benefit over aspirin and NSAIDs (e.g. – Motrin) which cause an enormous amount of gastritis and ulcer bleeding, to the point of killing 15,000 – 20,000 Americans yearly! The studies on willow bark are quite consistent in their effectiveness in reducing pain. Let’s look at some of the research.

In one study, 210 patients with severe chronic low back pain were randomly assigned to receive an oral willow bark extract with either 120 mg (low dose) or 240 mg (high dose) of salicin, or placebo, in a 4-week blinded trial. In the last week of treatment, 39% in the group receiving high-dose extract were PAIN-FREE, 21% in the group receiving low-dose extract were pain-free, and only 6% in the placebo group were pain-free (P <0.001). The response in the high-dose group was evident after only 1 week of treatment. (9) They then studied 451 patients who came in with low back pain in an open study, using salicin 240 mg, 120 mg, or standard orthopedic/NSAID (e.g.-Motrin, etc) care for four weeks. 40% of the patients in the 240 mg group and 19% in the 120 mg group were pain-free after four weeks. In the standard treatment group using standard medications, only 18% were pain-free. The study showed that willow bark was not just far more effective and safer than standard prescription therapies, but also decreased the cost of care by approximately 40%! (10) No adverse effects on the stomach lining (e.g.-indigestion, ulcers, etc) were observed, in contrast to aspirin. Willow bark extract has also been shown to be effective for osteoarthritis and was about as effective as Vioxx. (11) Other studies are also available for those of you who would like more information on willow bark. (12-16)

Boswellia, also known as Frankincense, has been used in traditional Ayurvedic medicine for centuries. Boswellia has been found to be quite helpful in treating inflammation and pain (17-22) and it also does this without causing ulcers like aspirin family medications (23). It has been shown in studies to be helpful for both rheumatoid arthritis (24) and osteoarthritis. (25) with the **pain index falling by 90% after eight weeks** with a similarly dramatic increase in function.

Boswellia has also been demonstrated to have significant anti-inflammatory properties, being helpful

in asthma and colitis as well as pain. A common dose is 150-350 mg 3 times a day.

Cherry Fruit—Although there are not as many human studies on the use of tart cherries, they also contain compounds which inhibit COX (inflammation) as does ibuprofen.”

(26) and tart cherries possess both antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

Many other natural approaches to pain are discussed in my new book. In addition, though we have focused on metabolic therapies, do not forget how powerful manipulative therapies, acupuncture, body and energy work, etc can be in treating pain—especially when combined with these therapies.

Although we can often block pain naturally, it is important to remember that pain is often simply your body’s way of telling you that it desperately needs something—and what it needs is usually natural and not a chemical. So always remember to treat “SHIN”—Sleep, Hormonal support, Infections (especially yeast), and Nutritional support—as well as giving pain therapies. People do not have to be in pain any more!

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