

Journey to Wellness — A free self-guided healthy living program

Take charge of your pain: Coping activities

There is no single cure for chronic pain. It takes a team approach and involves medical management, movement therapy and learning coping strategies.

This month, try new coping strategies to manage your pain. Check off as many strategies as you can.

- Practice breathing exercises**
Inhale slowly through the nose, allowing your lungs and belly to expand. Then exhale slowly through your mouth and nose.
- Get moving**
Incorporate a gentle stretching program into your routine, such as [yoga](#) or tai chi.
- Participate in meaningful activities**
Set aside time each day for a simple activity that is calming or brings you joy.
- Engage in mindfulness**
Allow yourself to [focus on the present moment](#). To start, try paying attention to one of your senses at a time, such as hearing or vision.
- Use moderation and pacing**
Set realistic goals and start by doing one-third of what you think you can do.
- Practice good sleep habits**
Establish regular bed and wake times. Do not spend your day in bed.
- Eliminate unhelpful substances**
Smoking restricts blood flow, which prevents healing. Alcohol creates nerve damage over time.
- Treat related conditions**
Explore cognitive behavioral therapy with a licensed mental health professional to help decrease symptoms of depression, anxiety, and other mental and physical health concerns.
- Stay connected to your support system**
While it's important to take time for yourself, lean into support from caring family and friends when experiencing bouts of chronic pain.

Print this checklist or save it to your desktop for digital tracking.

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