

# Hope for patients with chronic pain

## Syndrome *Spotlight*

### CHRONIC PAIN

**Definition:** Pain anywhere in the body, lasting between 6-12 weeks or longer. Pain that may have originated with an acute injury but does not subside even after healing process has taken place.

**Symptoms may include:** discomfort, painful sensations such as; throbbing, aching, stabbing, pinching, pulsing, sharp, numbness, tingling, etc- throughout the body or in a specific area (ie back, arm, foot, hip, neck, etc)

**Diagnosis:** Chronic pain is diagnosed using a variety of factors including the above. Diagnostic tests like MRI, CT Scans, etc may be used or needed to find specific pain issues, such as; pinched nerve, herniated disc, degenerative disc disease, inflammation and others. Using this information proper diagnosis and treatment can be assessed.

#### **Treatment:**

Pain is common. Some patients find that conservative treatment at home will resolve it. Ice, heat, massage, rest and anti-inflammatory medications for a few days may be the solution while in acute stages.

When more conservative treatment fails, proper diagnosis and access to correct pain management resource is needed.

Physical therapy may help for improving posture habits or flexibility as poor posture and inflexibility can lead to imbalances in the spine resulting in herniated disks, pinched nerves, drop foot, hand, neck and shoulder pain, etc. Treatment may require medications, injection therapy, physical therapy and/or surgery. Usually, a combination of these methods yields the most success in proper management of chronic pain.



- **Pain affects more Americans than** diabetes, heart disease and cancer.
- - Pain: 76.2 million people (National Centers for Health Statistics)
- - Diabetes: 20.8 million people (American Diabetes Association)
- - Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke: 18.7 million people (American Heart Association)
- - Cancer: 1.4 million people (American Cancer Society)