



PAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

(Patient Education- Part 4- Patient Handout)

Becoming Active Again - How the Protectometer Handbook can help

1. Map your recovery

- Trace your journey out of the swamp of DIMS

2. Plan your strategy

Active coping strategies are better than passive coping strategies

Learn active coping strategies (SIMs)

- Learn about the problem (persisting pain / central sensitisation)
- Develop a plan (we are doing this)
- Look at different ways to move (we are doing this)
- Improve fitness
- Work with supporting health professionals
- Eat better
- Identify DIMs & SIMs (remember they are well hidden!)
- Change the language you use around others and to yourself (avoid catastrophising language)
- Be open to changing your views and beliefs around pain, damage and injury.
(growth mindset vs fixed mindset)

Identify and avoid passive coping strategies (DIMS)

- Waiting for someone to 'Fix your pain'
- Letting someone else take control
- Doing nothing to help yourself
- Avoiding activity (because it hurts)
- Believing activity will make you worse
- Relying solely on medication
- Hoping pain will just 'go away'.
- Holding on to longstanding beliefs that are detrimental to your recovery (and not supported by science) – This will be tough!

3. Learn to Move Smart – Change old thinking

- If activity is driven by DIMs, you will have two common behaviours:

1) Movement with fear of pain (fear leads to doing less)

2) Movement with No pain, No gain attitude (Boom and Bust)

- Both these behaviours will turn up the protective system leading to more pain and less movement (see diagram page 36). This is because the brain is a great learner.

- When you respect, understand & no longer fear pain, you can use bioplasticity to retrain your systems to allow for more movement, and less pain over time.

- Road to recovery = KNOW PAIN, KNOW GAIN.

The Explain Pain Handbook Protectometer is a book to help you understand your persisting pain , written by GL Mosely and DS Butler (NOI Publications , Australia , 2018).

Your physio or EP will advise you if they feel you should purchase this handbook (available at reception).

It is a tool to help you understand and better manage your pain and we have used this and other NOI publications and lectures from Mosely and Butler as and as a resource to develop this pain management program.

If you have not been introduced to this handbook, don't worry, your physio will still help you to understand DIMs and SIMs and talk you through this process as you become active again.

4. Activate - Become Active Again- And Think about Goal Setting.

- i) Use the mountain analogies**
- Mt back then
 - Mt now

Consider:

- Tissue tolerance (the point in which tissue damage occurs)
- Protect with pain (the point where your pain system is triggered to protect you with pain)
- The buffer zone (the movement zone between your protect with pain point and Tissue damage)
- Flare up (the point in which you've caused the system to ramp up too much and flare)
- Reflect on what it was like without pain
- Now consider what it is like currently, with pain...
- Your Buffer Zone is now a much larger zone and the Protect with pain point comes on much earlier than it used to. It may even trigger so early that even just thinking about moving hurts.
- But, consider how far this is away from your tissue tolerance (the point where damage occurs).
- You are safe, but sore.

ii) Understand Flare Ups.

- Flare ups are overprotection.
- You have moved into the pain zone in Protectometer.
- Remember HURT NOT HARM some pain is OK but increasing pain is NOT.
- If you try and push through a flare up your brain will try and stop you and take drastic steps to protect you eg - vomit, dizzy, faint, more pain.
- DON'T push through a flare up, but don't be scared of some pain.

iii) Set up base camp.

- Set an activity goal.
- Base camp is up the mountain BUT - where you will not flare up
- and not injure yourself with activity
- Your 'Base Camp' is somewhere between your 'Protect with pain' point and your Tissue Tolerance point. (For Example- A goal is walking and you start hurting at 5 minutes of walking, and you know your absolute limit is 30mins. So, the base camp is set between 5 minutes and 30 minutes of walking.)
- You can set up a base camp on anything you like playing with the kids, gardening, walking the dog, shopping
- Think about activities- You want to do (the fun stuff)
- you have to do (the chores)

iv) Prepare your backpack.

- Use your imaginary backpack as a tool to help you cope and pack SIMs and throw out DIMs (see page 41 Protectometer).

v) Enjoy the view.

- Enjoy the view as you progress up the mountain and plan your progress by doing a bit more each day or week, but not too much! (This is progress with activity, despite pain- and you start to achieve your goal)

5. Use your own drug cabinet in your head.

- You have many chemicals in your brain to make you happy and help with pain.
- Serotonin, endorphins etc are like morphine.
- These 'happy hormones' help to stop the DIM's.
- Chillout Zone and Breathing will help to re-introduce the 'Happy Hormones' and 'Pain Relieving' chemicals to your brain and help with the brain plasticity approach to Pain Management.