Coping with Chronic Pain Caused by Neuropathy

by MARLENE WALLACE

Managing Neuropathic Pain

Chronic pain developing from neuropathy usually is related to some form of tissue damage. The nerve fibers may also be damaged or dysfunctional with this chronic condition. Once the nerve fibers are damaged, they can send incorrect signals to pain centers in the brain, which causes the body to react to pain inappropriately. Neuropathic pain, or nerve pain, is quite common, and it is often chronic in nature, occurring when a portion of the central nervous system is injured. This greatly impacts a person's quality of life, which leads them to want to know what treatment options are available. However, there are also many different types of pain management strategies and coping techniques you can experiment with and see what works best for you.

Relax When You Can

Relaxation techniques are essential to learning how to manage chronic pain of any kind. This could include learning how to manage tension that results from excessive stress. Some people prefer secluding themselves during certain portions of the day while others listen to soothing music. Many people make sure to set aside "cooling down" time for when they undergo a stressful situation. These relaxation techniques include soaking in a warm bathtub, reading a book, or counting to ten. Try different common techniques that are known for relaxing a person and find out what works for you.

Keep a Pain Journal

When working with a professional, it is important to keep a pain journal. This log of chronic pain activity can help you identify key factors of prognosis that a medical professional may need to know. Note important details about your pain so that you can easily recognize trends. A journal can also reveal what types of relaxation techniques work better than others, allowing you to adjust accordingly or at the very least plan your day more effectively.

Reach out to Others

People with chronic pain often seek out others that are going through the same things they are. Whether this is through a support group, finding people online on a message board centered on chronic pain or talking with friends and family that have gone through something similar, simply talking about the problem can help. Chronic pain is a private matter, and you may feel like you are the only one undergoing this trial. However, there are other people out there willing to listen, who have just as much experience, and possibly even more, than you do.

Beware of Depression

Those with chronic pain, who are not following through with treatment plans as prescribed by a professional, are shown to be at a greater risk for depression. This is another point where a journal can help, because if you also log your emotions throughout the pain, as well as measures to help deal with them, you can see if you are at risk

for emotional depression. If you see trends growing toward depression within the journal, it can be a signal that you need a psychiatric consultant. If you are struggling, please reach out to a mental health professional; they can help you determine what kind of counseling and therapy you may need.

Try Hypnosis

Hypnosis has been shown to assist people suffering with chronic pain to varying degrees. It can mostly be administered in two ways. First, a post-hypnotic suggestion can help reduce the pain felt. Second, self-hypnosis can be taught to a patient, teaching them to hypnotize themselves turning a bout of chronic pain. This is also considered a relaxation technique.

Use Distraction Measures

Distracting yourself from the pain is also an effective method for relief of discomfort, and it can be one of the simplest methods of managing neuropathic pain. Mentally visualizing calming serenity and focusing your attention away from the pain can create a positive mental state. You can also watch an enjoyable TV program or movie, or engage someone in a conversation to take your mind off of the pain. This can work successfully within a support group or developing a support system of peers that can be called upon when needed (perhaps by phone).