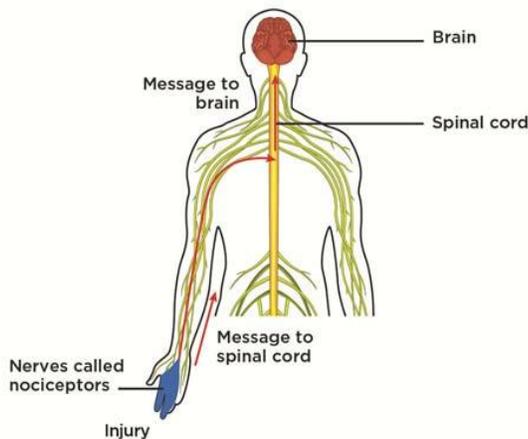


CHRONIC PAIN

What is pain?

Pain is a subjective, individual experience that results from complex brain processing which are influenced by physical, psychological and environmental factors. It is defined as an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience which is associated with actual tissue damage or a perceived threat of tissue damage.



Acute and Sub-acute pain

Acute pain occurs resulting from trauma or a condition that affects the tissue, which acts as a warning to the brain to protect the area. Pain receptors in the affected tissue called 'nociceptors' become stimulated and send a message to the spinal cord, which relays the message to the brain where it is processed and interpreted as pain. Acute pain lasts for a short time, generally resolving in four weeks. Sub-acute pain is the transition period from acute to chronic pain, but the progression can be prevented by identifying components contributing to the ongoing pain and implementing appropriate strategies.

Chronic Pain

Chronic pain is pain that lasts beyond the expected time of tissue healing (>12 weeks) and its development results from contributing physical, psychological and environmental factors. Chronic pain can significantly impact a person's life, making it difficult to participate in regular daily activities, work and social engagements which can have a negative impact on mental health and in turn exacerbate the pain. Due to these multi-factorial components of chronic pain, management is complex and requires a healthcare professional to identify and address the modifiable contributing factors.



For more information on understanding chronic pain and how to manage it in conjunction with your healthcare professional, the ACI Pain Management Network is a highly recommended resource:

<http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/chronic-pain>

Our physiotherapists at Narrabri Physiotherapy are healthcare professionals that are informed in the management of chronic pain conditions. If you believe you are suffering from a chronic pain condition and would like to seek help, you can contact us directly for an assessment, no referral is required.

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