

Pain Amplification Syndrome

Chronic pain is so hard to live with, so hard to explain, and so hard for researchers to understand. Whether it is fibromyalgia, various neuropathies, irritable bowel, reflex sympathetic dystrophy, myofascial syndrome, persistent back pain, neck pain, headaches, or even undiagnosed but unending pain, there is no magic bullet. There is no single treatment or therapy.

However, various combined treatments have been used more and more in hospitals, pain clinics, and clinical offices around the world. Clearly some forms of medications or nutritional/botanical/homeopathic interventions are offered and may be effective. Yet, now hypnotherapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, therapeutic visualization, biofeedback, neurofeedback, relaxation exercises, and energy psychologies have shown to be of tremendous help. So often these therapies are combined. Several of the PDFs in this Section Two offer further explanation.

Pain Amplification Syndrome is a new piece of the pain puzzle. You see, some forms of trauma turn on pain signals in the body which, initially, serve us well by alerting us to get help and mobilizing our own internal resources. In most cases, once the trauma is resolved, the alarms are turned off and life goes back to normal. In other cases, sadly, the alarm never goes off. A sort of endless loop is created between the nervous system and the brain. Nerves continue to fire and send electrochemical signals to the brain which interprets those signals as pain. The more this loop continues to exist, the stronger the pain signals are amplified. As a result, you must endure a pain that is desperately difficult to turn off. Fatigue, frustration, anger, despair, depression, anxiety, hopelessness, weariness, and more arise amplifying the pain even more. Additionally, your muscles become more tense and spasmodic, your nerves are “on end”, your internal resources become exhausted, and so do you.

Since Pain Amplification Syndrome cannot exist without your brain’s perception of pain. Altering that perception, reducing the body’s alarm, interrupting the pain signal loop, and increasing the production of pain blocking chemicals in the brain and in the spinal cord all contribute to reduced pain and increased healing.

Pain Amplification Syndrome should not be ignored by those suffering with chronic pain of any kind. Now, we understand more about what it is. Now, we understand more about how to help.