

In Good Hands

A Newsletter for the Friends and Patients of Dr. John Falkenroth, D.C.
Back Pain And Sciatica Clinic ♦ (831) 475-8600 ♦ www.RepairMyBack.com
Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am – 12noon and 2pm – 6pm



Convenient and affordable relief of back pain, neck pain and sciatica.
No long-term treatment plans. Walk-ins welcome. No appointment needed.

“One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life: That word is love.” ~ *Sophocles*

While Your Pain May Not Be All in Your Head, What's in Your Head May Play a Role in How Much Pain You Feel. *Here's Why...*



Also this month:

- ✓ **The psychology of pain** - What expectations have to do with how much pain one experiences.
- ✓ **Do older people really feel more pain?** Research gives reason why older people may feel more pain than younger adults.
- ✓ **Who experiences more pain... men or women?** Study shows it may depend on what one has been told.
- ✓ **Man sentenced to death is recognized as a hero 40 years later** - Why would a country sentence a man to death and then recognize him as a hero four decades after the fact? His story is incredible...

For most people, pain is an infrequent nuisance. For others, it's a burden that influences every aspect of their lives. It's one of the most common and difficult problems people face. And if you suffer with pain, you are not alone.

Check out these mind-boggling statistics...

Here are the number of Americans affected by each of the following conditions:

Cancer - 1.4 million (According to the American Cancer Society)

Coronary Heart Disease (Including Heart Attack

and Chest Pain) and **Stroke** - 18.7 million people (According to the American Heart Association)

Diabetes - 20.8 million people (diagnosed and estimated undiagnosed, according to the American Diabetes Association.)

The National Centers for Health Statistics reports that pain affects an estimated 76.2 million people, which is more than diabetes, heart disease, and cancer combined.

In fact, pain is cited as the most common reason Americans go to the doctor. It is a leading cause of disability, and it is a major contributor to healthcare costs.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics

(2006): *"More than one-quarter of Americans (26%) age 20 years and over report that they have had a problem with pain of any sort that persisted for more than 24 hours. Adults age 45-64 years were the most likely to report pain lasting more than 24 hours (30%). Twenty-five percent (25%) of young adults age 20-44 reported pain, and adults age 65 and over were the least likely to report pain (21%)."*

What Are Commonly Reported Pain Conditions?

According to the report: *"When asked about four common types of pain, respondents of a National Institute of Health Statistics survey indicated that low back pain was the most common (27%), followed by severe headache or migraine pain (15%), neck pain (15%), and facial ache or pain (4%). Back pain is the leading cause of disability in Americans under the age of 45. More than 26 million Americans between the ages of 20-64 experience frequent back pain."*

"Adults with low back pain are often in worse physical and mental health than people who do not have low back pain: 28% of adults with low back pain report limited activity due to a chronic condition, as compared to 10% of adults who do not have low back pain. Also, adults reporting low back pain were three times as likely to be in fair or poor health and more than four times as likely to experience serious psychological distress as people without low back pain."

So, pain is common and can be life changing, but what if you could affect how much pain you feel...

Simply By the Way You Think?

A team of German researchers say you probably can. Here is how... You have probably heard of the placebo effect. It occurs when people experience positive results from a fake or sham treatment (like a sugar pill) because they expected it to be helpful.

Dr. Katharina Schwarz from the Institute of Psychology at the Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg (JMU) in Bavaria, Germany notes, *"The placebo effect often works quite well when treating pain and depression."* Her research shows that the mere expectation of getting a drug can alleviate symptoms and make patients feel better. She adds, *"And those are not just the patient's subjective sensations, it can actually be measured physiologically."*

Dr. Katharina Schwarz is an expert on how expectations influence perception and behavior, and she did an amazing experiment that showed just how much a person's expectations of pain actually affected how much

pain they felt. In the experiment, men were given a stimulus and asked to rate how much pain they felt. Later that day, they were given information that either told them that men feel more pain than women or vice versa. The researchers backed up the claim with reasons like women have a higher threshold for pain because they endure childbirth or men don't feel as much pain because of their ancestral role as hunters, etc.

They repeated the experiment the next day. The participants who thought that men were less sensitive rated the pain as being much less intense than they did on the previous day. However, those who had learned that women have a higher pain tolerance considered themselves more sensitive to pain than before.

According to Dr. Schwarz, *"I want to increase the awareness, especially of students, for these mechanisms and in particular for the ones that have a negative impact on people."*

Past studies have demonstrated that patients who feel like they'll never get better don't respond to treatments as well as patients who are confident their condition will improve.

Another study recently published in the journal *Cell Reports* finds that pain actually changes cells—which may explain why some people continue to feel pain in an area long after their injury heals. Investigators from King's College London observed slight epigenetic changes in the immune cells around damaged nerves. These changes to the epigenome persisted long after the cells were replaced by newer cells weeks or months later, giving the impression such cells had a "memory" of the previous injury. The researchers suspect these modifications to the epigenome alter which genes are expressed in those cells and may make them more sensitive to pain in the future.

So what does all this mean for you?

For starters, even though many people live with pain, it's not normal, so it's important to consult with a doctor who can help identify the underlying cause of your pain and treat it. It's also important that you are confident that such a treatment will benefit your condition. If you suffer from back pain or other musculoskeletal complaints, then there's a great chance that chiropractic treatment can help you get out of pain and back to living your life.

Don't forget, if you ever have any questions or concerns about your health, talk to us. Contact us with your questions. We're here to help and don't enjoy anything more than participating in providing you natural pain relief.

THANK YOU... 

Thank you to those of you who referred your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors to our practice. When we see your name as the person who referred a new patient, we get reassured that you're happy with your experience at our clinic. Thank you for your trust and thank you again for your referrals.

Man Sentenced to Death Is Recognized as a Hero 40 Years Later...

*Why would a country sentence a man to death and then
recognize him as a hero four decades later? This story is incredible...*

You've probably heard the old adage that truth is often stranger than fiction. This is actually only part of the actual quote that is rarely used in its full length and seldom attributed to its originator. It goes...

*“Truth is stranger than fiction,
but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities;
Truth isn't.”*

Who originally said that? None other than Mark Twain. If you like interesting and insightful quotes, Twain is a person you should look up. He was very insightful and not afraid to speak his mind.

Now back to the story... but you may want to keep that quote in mind as you read on...

It was some time in the early 1940s. The place was Poland.

Hitler and the Nazis had a plan to exterminate certain races of people and conquer the world. But not everyone knew it... yet.

Many countries were ignorant to Hitler's plans or they simply chose to turn a blind eye. "But he is doing it over there - not here," was a common excuse to ignore Germany's actions. That attitude proved costly to many...

Witold Pilecki joined the Polish resistance soon after the Nazis invaded Poland. When mysterious camps started popping up all over the country, he suspected they had an evil purpose and he set out on a mission to discover what was really going on.

So he did something completely unimaginable... He deliberately got himself arrested by the Nazis so that he could infiltrate one of the camps: Auschwitz.

He spent 2.5 long years suffering at Auschwitz in order to send information to the world that the Nazis were actually running death camps, and this intelligence was used to try to convince Germany's enemies to send help.

How did he send this information back to compatriots? He built a radio in the death camp using various parts that had been smuggled in.

When help didn't arrive, Pilecki escaped and set out to contact the London-based Polish government-in-exile in an effort to try to get help for all the suffering people in Auschwitz and the other concentration camps. But the Allies did not believe his dispatches could be true. They thought his claims were exaggerated or false because they could not believe that so many had been killed in the death camps during the preceding years.

When Poland later fell under the control of Communists, he was sentenced to death on charges of espionage and the illegal crossing of the borders under a false name. After the fall of communism towards the end of the 20th century, Pilecki's true contributions to the war effort were finally recognized by his countrymen, all charges against him were posthumously dropped, and he was decorated with the highest honors the Polish military could offer.

So there you have it. A man who sacrificed his own life by willingly entering a Nazi death camp to try to save Poland (and the world) wasn't recognized as the hero he was until over 40 years after his death.

The truth certainly can be stranger than fiction, but it is because "fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't."

If you know anyone with back pain, neck pain or sciatica, encourage them to call us. We love helping our patients and their friends and family through their tough times and getting them feeling better. Remember that early treatment is key to a full and complete recovery. Don't wait until you can no longer move!

Did You Know?...

The Important Benefits of Drinking Enough Water!

With the availability of beverages like coffee, tea, soda, and juice, it's easy to miss out on one of the most important liquids that should fill our cup—water.

So how much water should a person drink to stay healthy? One study conducted by the Mayo Clinic found that properly hydrated women consume about 2.7 liters (91 fluid ounces) of total water a day. That being said, factors like physical activity, hot or humid weather, high altitude, or having an illness can play a part in how much fluid a person should take in.

Drinking enough water has important health benefits. Here are just a few:

- **Weight Control** – Not only does switching out a high-sugar, caloric beverage for water help reduce excess energy consumption, but it may also aid in determining whether or not the body is signaling for food or hydration. One study found that obese individuals who drank more water had increased energy expenditure and weight change when blood carbohydrate and insulin concentrations were not elevated.
- **Protects Against Cardiovascular Disease** – A recent study found a connection between dehydration and negative endothelial function with impaired cardiovascular health in humans. The study out of the European Journal of Nutrition claims that, "Mild dehydration can impair vascular function nearly as much as smoking a cigarette."
- **Stabilizes the Brain** – Research into adolescent dehydration discovered that inadequate consumption of water can cause headaches, irritability, poorer physical performance, and reduced cognitive function. It is unlikely that these ailments are restricted to the adolescent age demographic.
- **The Harvard School of Public Health** claims "Drinking enough water is essential for physiological processes such as circulation, metabolism, temperature regulation, and waste removal."

So, how do you know if you're drinking enough water? Here are some things to look out for that may indicate dehydration: decreased urine output, dry skin, headaches, constipation, dizziness, dry mouth, or fatigue.

Tip Of The Month

Foods You Can Eat to Reduce Inflammation

A new study conducted by researchers from the University of Florida may give another reason why older people complain about pain more than those who are younger. The small, preliminary study has suggested for the first time that inflammation may occur quicker and at a higher magnitude—and stays around longer—when seniors experience pain. This might mean that older adults are more susceptible to developing chronic pain. It also gives yet another reason to attempt to decrease inflammation as soon as possible. Getting treatment as quickly as possible after an injury or the onset of pain may be critical in decreasing the chances of the pain getting worse and becoming chronic.

While reducing inflammation following an injury is important, inflammation isn't just associated with pain. Higher than normal levels of inflammation can trigger many disease processes including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease.

One of the best things a person can do to help keep inflammation in check is eat foods with anti-inflammatory properties. According to *ScienceDaily*, a study by scientists from the University of Liverpool's Institute of Aging and Chronic Disease, "has identified food stuffs that can help prevent chronic inflammation that contributes to many leading causes of death." Their work shows that diets rich in fruits and vegetables, which contain polyphenols, protect against age-related inflammation and chronic diseases. According to researcher Sian Richardson, "The results of our study suggest that (poly)phenols derived from onions, turmeric, red grapes, green tea, and açai berries may help reduce the release of pro-inflammatory mediators in people at risk of chronic inflammation. Older people are more susceptible to chronic inflammation and as such they may benefit from supplementing their diets with isorhamnetin, resveratrol, curcumin, and vanillic acid or with food sources that yield these bioactive molecules."

Remember, we're always here to help you and your friends and family get pain relief and maintain your independence and the active lifestyle that you all deserve. After you're done with this newsletter and the enclosed flyers, please pass them on to someone you know who has back pain, neck pain or sciatica. Thank you.

The information contained in this newsletter and in the inserted flyers is solely advisory, and should not be substituted for medical advice. Any and all health care concerns, decisions, and actions must be done through the advice and counsel of a healthcare professional who is familiar with your updated medical history. We cannot be held responsible for actions you may take without a thorough exam or appropriate referral. If you have any further concerns or questions, please call our office at (831)475-8600.