

## **Disclaimer**

We offer these resources to you as a good Samaritan service only. Their inclusion here represents neither their endorsement of our services nor our endorsement of all information presented on these websites. Please check with the doctor if you need further explanation or difficulty understanding.

To begin with get the facts on Persistent Pain .Click link below to learn from pain physicians  
<http://www.painmed.org/patient/facts.html>

Learn the truth about Chiropractic treatments /spinal manipulations  
[chiro.ppt](#)

Success rates for patients returning back to work are highly dependent on timely referrals. The chances of returning to work are as follows:

- Off work for 90 days or less - 94%
- Off work between 90 days and 2 years - 19%
- Off work greater than 2 years - 2%

Patients with injuries that often cause long term disability such as non-specific low back pain, or CRPS should be referred early for better outcomes.

The number of recorded work-related disabilities has increased dramatically over the past thirty years. The return-to-work statistics are alarming. Chronic pain patients who have been out of work for longer than a year have an estimated chance of ever returning to full-time employment of <3%; those who have been out of work for longer than two years have <1% chance of ever working again. Insurance carriers are interested in the rehabilitation of these patients because of the enormous expenses they incur. An estimated 5% of all workers' compensation claimants account for 85% of the disability funds distributed. Unfortunately, many patients do not know what options they have for return to work. It is helpful to review what a vocational rehabilitation counselor does and to help group members understand what is involved in a return-to-work determination.

Many chronic pain patients receive workers' compensation benefits or social security disability income. These patients may fear that their benefits will be jeopardized if they return to work.

One common misconception is that persons receiving compensation benefits are lazy and are not interested in working. In fact, most people on disability leave wish that they were working. In our society work is a valuable part of who we are. We all have a need to accomplish things and to feel useful. Although many chronic pain patients may not have the option of returning to

their former place of employment, they should be encouraged to explore other full-time, part-time, or volunteer work opportunities. Patients should become familiar with the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) so that they know their rights regarding discrimination due to a pain-related disability. The central theme of the A.D.A. is that a disability that does not interfere with job performance cannot be used to reject applicants. In addition, employers are required to make accommodations for persons with disabilities so that they can work.

Patients may not be aware of one employment advantage of persons with disabilities: some large corporations receive tax credits for disabled employees. Thus, individuals with chronic pain may want to consider contacting the disability/equal opportunity office of a corporation rather than the personnel department to improve their chances of being hired.

*“We are ready to partner with you in reducing your pain, increasing your function, improving your quality of life or prepare you for an employment ready state whichever applies to your situation. We are always ready to consider a change in medications assuming your goals are aligned with the above .”*

## Coping and support

An accident that results in a life-changing event can be very threatening. When we are threatened and gripped with fear ,our thinking starts to get distorted like a drop of ink in a glass of clear water. This eventually leads to subtle changes in behaviors (actions ) which is not noticed by us or others on a day to day basis but instantly by someone who may see you after a year or so! The sudden presence of disability can be frightening and confusing. After all, adapting to life with a disabilityor impairment— is no easy task. You may wonder how your injury will affect your everyday activities, job, relationships and long-term happiness.

Recovery from such an event takes time, but many people who are initially paralyzed with fear move on to lead productive and fulfilling lives. It's essential to stay motivated and get the support you need.

## **Grieving**

If you're newly injured, you and your family will likely experience a period of mourning and grief. Although the grieving process is different for everyone, it's common to experience denial or disbelief, followed by sadness, anger, bargaining and, finally, acceptance.

The grieving process is a common, healthy part of your recovery. It's natural — and important — to grieve the loss of the way you were. But it's also necessary to set new goals and find a way to move forward with your life.

You'll likely experience many thoughts and emotions. And you'll probably have concerns about how your injury will affect your lifestyle, your financial situation and your personal relationships. Grieving and emotional stress are normal and common. However, if your grief and sadness are affecting your personal care, causing you to isolate yourself from others, or prompting you to abuse alcohol or other drugs, you may want to consider talking to a social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist. Or, you might find a support group made up of people with similarities to your condition to be helpful. Talking with others who truly understand what you're going through can be very encouraging, and members of the group may also have good advice on adapting areas of your home or workspace to better accommodate your current needs. Research if there are any support groups in your area.

## **Taking control**

One of the best ways to regain control of your life is to educate yourself about your condition and your options for reclaiming an independent life. A wide range of driving equipment and vehicle modifications is available today. The same is true of home modification products. Ramps, wider doors, special sinks, grab bars and easy-to-turn doorknobs make it possible for you to live more autonomously.

Because the costs of an intractable pain condition can be overwhelming, you may want to find out if you're eligible for economic assistance or support services from the state or federal government or from charitable organizations. Your rehabilitation team can help you identify resources in your area.

## **Talking about your disability**

Your friends and family may respond to your disability in different ways. Some may not be disturbed by your injury. Others may be uncomfortable and unsure if they're saying or doing the right thing.

Being educated about your intractable pain condition and willing to educate others is helpful. Children are naturally curious and sometimes adjust rather quickly if their questions are answered in a clear, straightforward way. Adults can also benefit from learning the facts. Explain the effects of your injury and what your family and friends can do to help. At the same time, don't hesitate to tell friends and loved ones when they're helping too much. Although it may be uncomfortable at first, talking about your injury often strengthens your relationships with family and friends.

## **Dealing with intimacy, sexuality and sexual activity**

Your persistent pain condition may affect your body's response to sexual stimuli. However, you're a sexual

being with sexual desires. A fulfilling emotional and physical relationship is possible, but requires communication, experimentation and patience. A professional counselor can help you and your partner communicate your needs and feelings. Your health care provider can provide the medical information you need regarding sexual health. You can have a very satisfying future complete with intimacy and sexual pleasure.

### **Looking ahead**

By nature, a spinal cord injury has a sudden impact on your life and the lives of those closest to you. When you first hear your diagnosis, you may start making a mental list of all of the things you can't do anymore. However, as you learn more about your injury and your treatment options, you may be surprised at all of the things you can do.

Thanks to new technologies, treatments and devices combined with an expanded consciousness, people with intractable pain play basketball, swim, spend time with kids and rest of family, go out and meet people, go back to work, serve in the military and are able to compete with others who don't suffer from intractable pain. They paint and take photographs. They get married, have and raise children, and have rewarding jobs.

Today, advances in stem cell research and nerve cell regeneration give hope for a greater recovery for people. At the same time, new medications are being investigated for people with long-standing pain. No one knows exactly when new treatments will become available, but you can remain hopeful about the future of pain research, while living your life to the fullest today.