



**Mountain Land**  
PHYSICAL THERAPY

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# **CHRONIC PAIN AND FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Ronen Dennis, PT, DPT**

# MEET OUR LUMBAR SPINE THERAPIST



## Ronen Dennis, PT, DPT Physical Therapist

Ronen Dennis earned his bachelor's degree from Southern Utah University in 2016 and went on to graduate with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy in 2019 from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professionals, Provo, UT.

He has been actively engaged in treating chronic pain for three years, showcasing a significant period of hands-on experience and exposure to various cases. He has worked with conditions such as lower back pain, arthritis, fibromyalgia, neuropathic pain, and CRPS. His patients have included individuals who hadn't been able to work for years, yet found renewed confidence in tasks like lifting and securing employment for the first time in many years. He is dedicated to staying updated with the latest research, attending relevant workshops or conferences, and participating in continuing education courses to enhance his knowledge and skills in managing chronic pain.

## TOOELE LOCATION



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# CHRONIC PAIN AND FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM



This program introduces a new model for understanding and treating pain, emphasizing the importance of considering both biological and psychosocial factors. It criticizes the traditional approach of solely focusing on pain intensity and relief and advocates for active rehabilitation and patient empowerment. The model highlights pain as part of the body's stress response and encourages a broader perspective on pain management. Overall, the patient will have a shift in how we approach pain, considering its biological and psychological aspects in addition to the physical symptoms.

A functional assessment program in physical therapy is a comprehensive evaluation process that examines a patient's functional abilities, limitations, and goals. It involves assessing various aspects such as mobility, strength, balance, coordination, and activities of daily living. The program aims to gather objective data to inform personalized treatment plans and measure the patient's progress over time.

This program benefits patients by providing a tailored approach to their rehabilitation journey. It ensures that their treatment plans address their specific functional limitations and goals, leading to more effective interventions. The program empowers patients to actively participate in their own recovery, promotes personalized care, and increases the chances of achieving improved functional outcomes and quality of life.

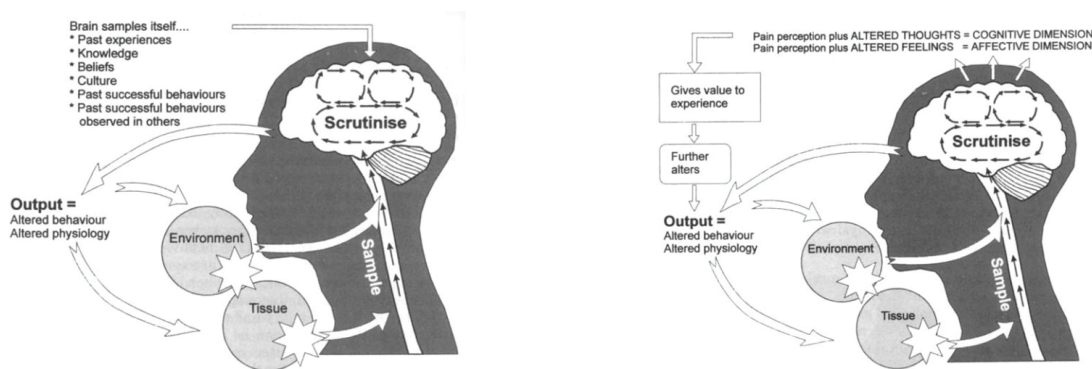


Diagram from: Pain, the Tissues and the Nervous System: A conceptual model (Louis Gifford)

As a result of tissue sampling, environment sampling and self-sampling, the brain/CNS produces appropriate thoughts and feelings. These perceptual "outputs" of the brain give value to the injury experience and further influence the activity of the physiological and behaviorally related output systems involved in survival and recovery.

# EDUCATION AND LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION

## **Pain Education:**

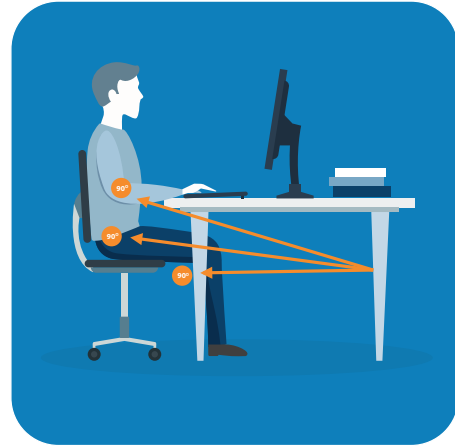
Understanding pain triggers, pain cycles, and pain management techniques can empower individuals to better manage their pain.

## **Posture Correction:**

Proper posture can alleviate strain on muscles and joints, reducing pain.

## **Ergonomic Guidance:**

For those with workplace-related pain, guidance on ergonomic adjustments can be helpful.



## TIPS FOR IMPROVING SLEEP TO MANAGE CHRONIC PAIN

### **Establish a Routine:**

Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day to regulate your body's internal clock.

### **Create a Comfortable Sleep Environment:**

Ensure your sleep environment is conducive to rest, with a comfortable mattress, pillows, and proper room temperature.

### **Practice Relaxation Techniques:**

Relaxation exercises like deep breathing, meditation, or gentle stretches before bed can help calm your mind and prepare your body for sleep.

### **Limit Stimulants:**

Avoid caffeine and heavy meals close to bedtime, as they can interfere with sleep.

### **Stay Active:**

Engage in regular physical activity, but avoid intense exercise close to bedtime.

### **Limit Screen Time:**

Reduce exposure to screens (phones, computers, TVs) before bed, as the blue light emitted can disrupt your sleep-wake cycle.

### **Manage Pain Before Bed:**

If pain is a barrier to sleep, consider pain-relief techniques such as hot or cold therapy, stretching, or using prescribed pain medications under your healthcare provider's guidance.

# TREATMENT INTERVENTIONS

## PAIN MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

### Functional Training:

Simulating daily activities can improve overall function and reduce pain during daily tasks.

### Taping Techniques:

Kinesiology tape or other taping methods can provide support to muscles and joints, reducing pain and improving movement patterns.

### Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS):

TENS units deliver low-level electrical currents to target nerves and reduce pain signals.

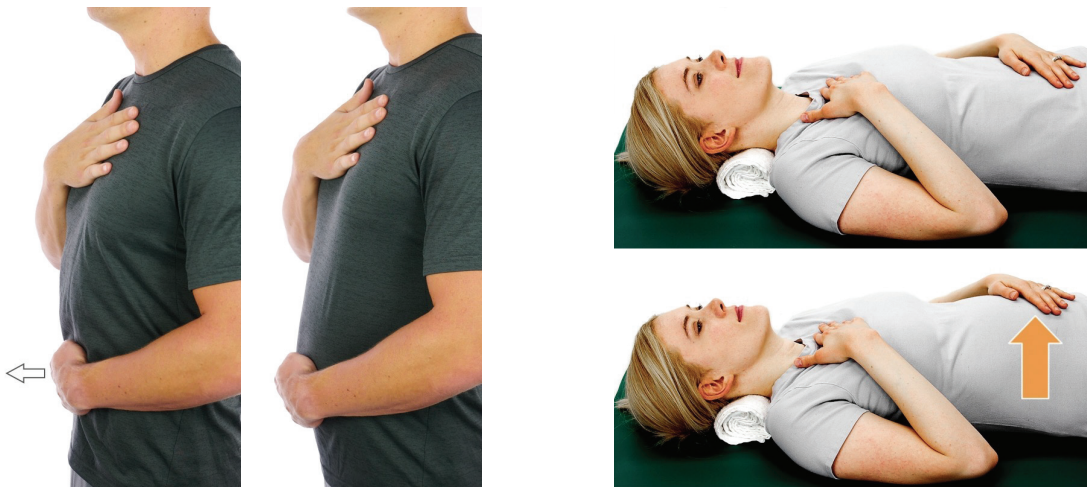
### Manual Therapy:

- Soft Tissue Mobilization: Techniques like massage and myofascial release can help relax tight muscles and reduce pain.
- Joint Mobilization: Gentle movements applied to joints can improve mobility.
- Manipulation: Controlled movements or adjustments can be used to improve joint mobility.

## BREATHING AND RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

### Diaphragmatic Breathing:

Place one hand on your breast bone and one hand on your abdomen near your navel. Slowly take a deep breath in and focus on trying to get your hand on your stomach rise while the hand on your breast bone remains still. As you breathe in, the hand on your stomach should rise.



Images from: HEP2GO

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: What are common chronic pain diagnosis that PT can help with?**

**A:** Osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, neuropathy (particularly diabetic neuropathy), chronic migraines, arthritis, fibromyalgia, neuropathic pain, complex regional pain syndrome and long-lasting pain resultant from trauma or surgery, among others.



**Q: When is pain considered chronic?**

**A:** Chronic pain is generally considered to be any pain that lasts more than 3 to 6 months and persists beyond the time frame in which an injury is expected to heal.



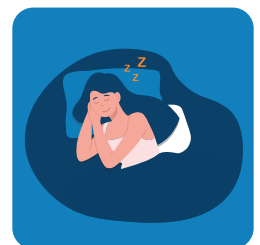
**Q: Should I take pain medications while on this program?**

**A:** The ultimate goal is not to use pain meds. However, there will be times when it is appropriate to do so. Long-term use of pain medications, especially opioids, can lead to physical dependence and tolerance. This means that over time, the same dose of medication might become less effective, and higher doses may be required to achieve the same level of pain relief.



**Q: How does sleep help chronic pain?**

**A:** Sleep plays a crucial role in managing chronic pain. Adequate and restorative sleep can have positive effects on pain perception, reduce inflammation, increase the speed of overall tissue healing and repair, assist in managing stress, improve coping strategies to better manage pain, regulate the nervous system to reduce heightened pain responses and enhance the effectiveness of pain-relieving medications.



**Q: Will pain persist forever?**

**A:** Pain levels vary and are influenced by a range of factors, including how the patient perceives their pain, their mood states, and their behaviors. Over time, most patients' pain will return to a more typical level. However, the duration this takes could vary significantly from person to person.



# SCREENING TOOL

Review these questions with your patient and if they answer true to any of these questions, they may be a good candidate for physical therapy.

T-True F-False NS-Not sure  
T F NS

My pain was caused by physical activity

Physical activity makes my pain worse

Physical activity might cause harm

I should not do physical activities which (might) make my pain worse

I cannot do physical activities which (might) make my pain worse

My work aggravated my pain

My work makes or would make my pain worse

I cannot do my normal work with my present pain



**SCAN OR VISIT TO LEARN MORE**



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