**Chronic Pain Self-Help Guide**

Pain in the body is usually a protective mechanism, but when it becomes chronic, it becomes pathological. The latest evidence indicates that chronic pain (pain that has been present for more than three months; IASP) leads to several actual changes in how your nervous system works and how the body responds to it. This means that your nervous system, including the area in your brain that processes, has become hypersensitive. To understand more, please use the QR code below and watch a short video.

 OR try this link: <https://www.oralmednet.com/patient-info>

The pain you feel may be localised to one area, or you may have more widespread pain. All pain in the body will contribute towards sensitising your nervous system and the pain processing in your brain. In a sensitised state, your body may mainly focus on the pain on a daily basis. In this way, the volume dial in the pain centre in your brain is turned up. This is a physical phenomenon proven by studies and not imagined.

The problem (pathology) is the pain, not whatever may have triggered it. There is no pathology where the pain is being felt that could be treated with surgery or other procedure.

**What can chronic pain cause in your day-to-day life:**

1. It can affect your home and work life.
2. Cause anxiety, anger
3. Lack of sleep

Your oral medicine specialist can help you diagnose and confirm your pain problem.

**So how do we help you manage this pain problem.**

All chronic pains have a common management pathway and some specific pathways that may also be used for facial pain above that.

**Under our care, 91% of patients with cTMD improve: see the article.**

[**https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212440319305346**](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212440319305346)

**The Common Pathways include:**

1. This explanation (including the video) and your understanding of chronic pain are the first step
2. Relaxation (gentle exercise if possible, listening to music that makes you happy) will help to dial down the volume in the pain centre
3. Meditation: this YouTube video may help: <https://youtu.be/Fdr-jK4XrrM>
4. Self-help advice if you have been given this
5. Improve your sleep. Look at the advice on this site: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~/media/CCI/Mental-Health-Professionals/Sleep/Sleep---Information-Sheets/Sleep-Information-Sheet---04---Sleep-Hygiene.pdf>

**Specific Pathways for facial pain may include:**

1. If an oral appliance has been recommended for you, then this would also help
2. Generally, headache and other pain medications (acute pain medications do not help this problem). Your clinician may prescribe medicines that will help reduce nerve sensitisation.