Soothing the Hurt

Many people choose meds to manage chronic pain, but alternatives exist.

June 5, 2014 By Kate Ferguson

Nearly 100 million Americans suffer from acute and chronic pain. They endure persistent pangs, stings, stiffness and any number of uncomfortable sensations for days, weeks, months or years.

That said, besides dispensing a prescription, many doctors suggest treatments that physicians would have sneered at just a few years ago. Depending on the nature of the ailment and the kind of pain felt, some of the most common alternative treatments include acupuncture, medical marijuana, regular physical activity, yoga, relaxation therapy, music therapy, massage, hypnosis, chiropractic treatments and supplements.

At the Burn Care Center at MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio, doctors use music therapy to help distract burn patients from the often-agonizing pain they feel when their dressings are changed. Essentially, music therapists instruct the burn patients to hum along to a song, beat a tempo on small instruments, keep time verbally with a tune, sing lyrics or participate in some other way.

“One of the things we realized,” says the burn center’s founder Richard Fratianne, MD, “is that music can have a calming effect on people.”

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/chronic-pain-relief-25717-8185