

## Pain

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Pain is a subjective and unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage. It is often described as a distressing or uncomfortable feeling that serves as a protective mechanism, alerting us to potential harm or injury. Pain can vary in intensity, duration, and quality depending on the underlying cause and individual perception.

Pain can be classified into two main categories: acute pain and chronic pain. Acute pain is typically short-lived and occurs as a direct result of injury, surgery, or illness. It serves as a warning sign that something is wrong and typically resolves as the underlying cause heals. On the other hand, chronic pain persists beyond the expected healing time and may be caused by conditions such as arthritis, nerve damage, or persistent inflammation. Chronic pain can significantly impact a person's quality of life and may require ongoing management.

Pain perception involves a complex interaction between the nervous system and the brain. When tissue damage or injury occurs, specialized nerve receptors called nociceptors detect and transmit pain signals to the spinal cord and brain. The brain then processes these signals, integrating them with other sensory information and emotional factors to create the experience of pain.

It's important to note that pain is a subjective experience and can vary from person to person. Different individuals may have different pain thresholds and pain tolerance levels, meaning they can perceive and respond to pain differently. Healthcare professionals often use various assessment tools and scales to evaluate and measure pain, considering both the physical and emotional aspects of the experience.

Treating pain usually involves identifying and addressing the underlying cause, as well as managing the pain itself. This can include medications, physical therapy, psychological interventions, and complementary approaches such as acupuncture or relaxation techniques. The goal of pain management is to reduce or alleviate pain, improve functionality, and enhance the overall well-being of the individual experiencing it.



## Types of pain

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Pain can be classified into different types based on various factors, including its underlying cause, duration, and location. Here are some common types of pain:

- **Nociceptive pain**

This type of pain occurs when specialized nerve receptors called nociceptors detect tissue damage or injury. Nociceptive pain can be further divided into two subtypes:

- **Somatic pain**

This pain arises from the skin, muscles, joints, bones, or connective tissues. It is often described as a sharp, localized, and well-defined pain. Examples include cuts, fractures, sprains, and arthritis.

- **Visceral pain**

Visceral pain originates from the internal organs, such as the abdomen or chest. It is often described as a deep, dull, or cramping pain that may be difficult to localize. Conditions like appendicitis, kidney stones, or gastrointestinal disorders can cause visceral pain.

- **Neuropathic pain**

Neuropathic pain results from damage or dysfunction of the nerves themselves. It is often described as a burning, shooting, or electric shock-like pain. Neuropathic pain can be caused by conditions like nerve compression, diabetes, shingles (postherpetic neuralgia), or conditions such as peripheral neuropathy or trigeminal neuralgia.

- **Radicular pain**

Radicular pain is caused by compression or irritation of a spinal nerve root, often due to a herniated disc or spinal stenosis. It typically radiates along the path of the affected nerve, such as down the leg or arm, and is often accompanied by numbness, tingling, or weakness.

- **Referred pain**

Referred pain is felt in an area distant from the actual source of the problem. For example, pain felt in the left arm during a heart attack is a form of referred pain. The internal organs and musculoskeletal system can both cause referred pain.

- **Phantom pain**

Phantom pain is experienced in a part of the body that has been amputated. Despite the absence of the limb or body part, individuals may still feel pain, tingling, or other sensations. The exact causes of phantom pain are not fully understood, but it is believed to involve changes in the central nervous system.

- **Psychogenic pain**

Psychogenic pain is pain that is not attributable to a specific physical cause but has a psychological origin. It can be influenced by emotional or psychological factors, such as anxiety, depression, or stress.

It's important to note that these categories are not always mutually exclusive, and some individuals may experience pain that falls into multiple categories. Proper diagnosis by a healthcare professional is crucial to determine the specific type of pain and develop an appropriate treatment plan.

## Knee pain

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Knee pain is a common type of musculoskeletal pain that affects people of all ages. It can have various causes and can range from mild discomfort to severe pain that hinders daily activities. Here are some key points about knee pain:

### Causes

- **Injuries**

Knee pain is often caused by acute injuries such as sprains, strains, ligament tears (like anterior cruciate ligament or ACL tears), meniscus tears, or fractures. These injuries can occur during sports, accidents, or falls.

- **Overuse**

Repetitive activities or overuse of the knee joint, such as running, jumping, or kneeling, can lead to knee pain. This includes conditions like patellofemoral pain syndrome (runner's knee), tendinitis, or bursitis.

- **Osteoarthritis**

Knee pain can be associated with osteoarthritis, a degenerative joint disease that causes the breakdown of cartilage. Osteoarthritis commonly affects older adults and can lead to chronic knee pain, stiffness, swelling, and reduced range of motion.

- **Rheumatoid arthritis**

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease that can affect the knee joint, leading to inflammation, pain, and stiffness.

- **Other conditions**

Knee pain can also be caused by other conditions such as gout, infection, dislocation, iliotibial band syndrome, or patellar tracking disorder.

## Symptoms and Diagnosis

- **Pain**

Knee pain can range from a dull ache to sharp, stabbing pain. The location, intensity, and duration of the pain may vary depending on the underlying cause.

- **Swelling and stiffness**

The knee joint may become swollen, and stiffness can limit movement.

- **Clicking or popping**

Some individuals may experience clicking, popping, or grinding sensations during knee movement.

- **Limited mobility**

Knee pain can restrict mobility and make it difficult to walk, climb stairs, or engage in physical activities.

To diagnose the cause of knee pain, a healthcare professional may perform a physical examination, review the medical history, and order imaging tests such as X-rays, MRI, or ultrasound. Sometimes, additional diagnostic procedures like arthroscopy (a minimally invasive procedure to visualize the inside of the knee joint) may be necessary.

## How can Healand help with knee pain

We offer a range of therapies that can help with knee pain caused by the various mechanisms described above. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Hip pain

Hip pain is a common complaint that can affect individuals of all ages, from young athletes to older adults. It can be caused by various factors and may range from mild discomfort to severe pain that interferes with daily activities. Here's an overview of hip pain:

### Causes

- **Osteoarthritis**

Hip osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease characterized by the breakdown of cartilage in the hip joint. It commonly affects older adults and can lead to pain, stiffness, decreased range of motion, and difficulty with walking or bearing weight.

- **Hip fractures**

Fractures of the hip, often seen in older individuals with weakened bones (osteoporosis), can cause sudden and severe hip pain. Hip fractures usually require immediate medical attention and may necessitate surgery.

- **Bursitis**

Hip bursitis is the inflammation of the bursae, small fluid-filled sacs that cushion the hip joint. It can result from repetitive motions or direct trauma to the hip and typically causes pain on the outside of the hip.

- **Tendinitis**

Tendinitis occurs when the tendons in the hip joint become inflamed or irritated, often due to overuse or repetitive activities. This condition can cause pain in the front, side, or back of the hip.

- **Muscle strains or tears**

Strained or torn muscles, such as the hip flexors or adductors, can cause hip pain. These injuries can occur during sports, physical activities, or sudden movements.

- **Hip labral tears**

The labrum is a ring of cartilage that lines the hip socket, providing stability to the joint. Tears in the labrum can cause hip pain, clicking or locking sensations, and limited range of motion.

- **Hip impingement**

Femoroacetabular impingement (FAI) occurs when there is abnormal contact between the ball and socket of the hip joint, leading to pain, stiffness, and potential damage to the joint structures.

- **Other conditions**

Other causes of hip pain may include infections, hip dysplasia, snapping hip syndrome, referred pain from the lower back or pelvis, or certain systemic diseases like rheumatoid arthritis.

## Symptoms and Diagnosis

Hip pain can present with various symptoms, including:

- **Pain**

Hip pain can range from a dull ache to sharp, stabbing pain. It may be felt in the hip joint, groin, outer hip, buttocks, or even radiate to the thigh or knee.

- **Stiffness and limited range of motion**

The hip joint may feel stiff, and movements like walking or bending may become challenging.

- **Swelling and tenderness**

Inflammation in the hip joint may cause swelling and tenderness around the hip area.

To diagnose the cause of hip pain, a healthcare professional will typically perform a physical examination, review the medical history, and may order imaging tests such as X-rays, MRI, or CT scans. Occasionally, diagnostic injections or arthroscopy may be used to evaluate the hip joint.

## How can Healand help with hip pain

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We offer a range of therapies that can help with hip pain caused by the various mechanisms described above. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Neck pain

Neck pain is a common condition that can be caused by a variety of factors. It can range from mild discomfort to severe pain, and it may be acute (short-term) or chronic (long-lasting). Here's an overview of neck pain:

### Causes

- **Muscle strain**

Poor posture, overuse of the neck muscles, or sudden movements can strain the muscles and ligaments in the neck, leading to pain and stiffness. This can occur due to activities like prolonged sitting, working at a computer for extended periods, or improper lifting techniques.

- **Whiplash**

Whiplash is a neck injury commonly caused by a sudden forceful backward and forward movement of the neck. It often occurs during car accidents but can also result from sports injuries or falls.

- **Herniated or bulging discs**

The intervertebral discs act as cushions between the vertebrae in the spine. When a disc herniates or bulges, the gel-like center can protrude and put pressure on nearby nerves, resulting in neck pain and sometimes radiating pain, numbness, or weakness in the arms.

- **Cervical spondylosis**

This is a degenerative condition that affects the spinal discs and joints in the neck as part of the aging process. It involves wear and tear of the cervical spine, which can cause neck pain, stiffness, and decreased mobility.

- **Cervical radiculopathy**

Compression or irritation of the nerves in the neck, typically due to herniated discs or bone spurs, can lead to cervical radiculopathy. This condition can cause pain, numbness, tingling, or weakness that radiates from the neck into the shoulder, arm, or hand.

- **Osteoarthritis**

Osteoarthritis can affect the joints in the neck, causing pain, stiffness, and limited range of motion.



- **Poor ergonomics**

Working or sleeping in positions that strain the neck, such as using an unsupportive pillow or maintaining awkward postures, can contribute to neck pain.

- **Other causes**

Neck pain can also be caused by conditions like spinal stenosis, fibromyalgia, infections, tumors, or referred pain from other structures in the body.

## Symptoms and Diagnosis

Neck pain can present with various symptoms, including:

- **Pain and stiffness**

Neck pain may be localized or radiate to the shoulders, upper back, or arms. It can range from aching, soreness, or sharp pain, and may be accompanied by stiffness that limits range of motion.

- **Headaches**

Neck pain can sometimes cause tension headaches that originate from the neck muscles.

- **Muscle spasms**

In response to injury or strain, the neck muscles may contract and cause spasms, leading to increased pain and discomfort.

- **Numbness or tingling**

If nerves are affected, neck pain may be accompanied by sensations of numbness, tingling, or weakness that radiate down the arm or into the fingers.

To diagnose the cause of neck pain, a healthcare professional will typically perform a physical examination, evaluate medical history, and may order imaging tests such as X-rays, MRI, or CT scans if needed.

## How can Healand help with neck pain

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We offer a range of therapies that can help with neck pain caused by the various mechanisms described above. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Lower back pain

Lower back pain is a prevalent condition that affects a significant number of people at some point in their lives. It can range from mild discomfort to severe pain and can be acute (short-term) or chronic (lasting for more than three months). Here's an overview of lower back pain:

### Causes

#### ○ Muscle strain

Straining the muscles and ligaments in the lower back, often due to improper lifting techniques, sudden movements, or overuse, can lead to lower back pain.

#### ○ Herniated or bulging discs

The intervertebral discs act as cushions between the vertebrae in the spine. When a disc herniates or bulges, the inner gel-like material can protrude and press on nearby nerves, causing lower back pain. This can occur due to aging, injury, or repetitive stress.

#### ○ Spinal stenosis

Spinal stenosis refers to the narrowing of the spinal canal or the openings through which nerves exit the spinal cord. This narrowing can put pressure on the spinal cord or nerves, resulting in lower back pain and sometimes leg pain or numbness.

#### ○ Degenerative disc disease

With age, the intervertebral discs can gradually wear down, leading to degenerative disc disease. This condition can cause lower back pain, stiffness, and reduced flexibility.

#### ○ Sciatica

Sciatica occurs when the sciatic nerve, which runs from the lower back down the back of each leg, becomes compressed or irritated. This can cause sharp, shooting pain, tingling, or numbness that radiates from the lower back through the buttocks and down the leg.

#### ○ Arthritis

Various forms of arthritis, such as osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis, can affect the lower back and cause pain, stiffness, and inflammation.

- **Spondylolisthesis**

Spondylolisthesis occurs when one vertebra slips forward over another, often due to a defect or fracture in the supporting structures of the spine. This can lead to lower back pain and may affect nerve function if it compresses spinal nerves.

- **Other causes**

Other potential causes of lower back pain include muscle spasms, spinal infections, kidney stones or infections, certain systemic diseases, or referred pain from other structures in the body.

## Symptoms and Diagnosis

Lower back pain can present with various symptoms, including:

- **Pain**

Lower back pain can range from a dull ache to sharp or stabbing pain. It may be localized to the lower back or radiate to the buttocks, hips, or legs, depending on the underlying cause.

- **Muscle spasms**

In response to injury or strain, the muscles in the lower back may contract and cause spasms, leading to increased pain and discomfort.

- **Limited mobility and stiffness**

Lower back pain can make it difficult to perform everyday activities and may result in reduced flexibility and stiffness in the lower back region.

- **Numbness or tingling**

If nerves are affected, lower back pain may be accompanied by sensations of numbness, tingling, or weakness that radiate into the buttocks, legs, or feet.

To diagnose the cause of lower back pain, a healthcare professional will typically perform a physical examination, evaluate medical history, and may order imaging tests such as X-rays, MRI, or CT scans if needed.

### How can Healand help with lower pain

We offer a range of therapies that can help with back pain caused by the various mechanisms described above. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Sciatica

Sciatica refers to pain that radiates along the path of the sciatic nerve, which runs from the lower back through the hips, buttocks, and down each leg. It is typically caused by compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve. Here's an overview of sciatica:

### Causes

- **Herniated or bulging discs**

One of the most common causes of sciatica is a herniated or bulging disc in the lumbar spine. When the inner gel-like material of a disc protrudes and presses on the sciatic nerve, it can lead to pain and other symptoms.

- **Spinal stenosis**

Narrowing of the spinal canal or nerve root canals in the lower back can result in compression of the sciatic nerve and cause sciatica symptoms.

- **Piriformis syndrome**

The piriformis muscle, located deep in the buttocks, can sometimes irritate or compress the sciatic nerve, leading to sciatica symptoms.

- **Spinal tumors or infections**

Rarely, tumors or infections in the spine can affect the sciatic nerve and cause sciatica.

- **Degenerative disc disease**

With age, the intervertebral discs can degenerate, leading to narrowing of the space between vertebrae and potential compression of the sciatic nerve.

## Symptoms

### ○ Pain

The hallmark symptom of sciatica is pain that radiates from the lower back or buttocks down the back of the leg. The pain can vary in intensity, from a mild ache to sharp, shooting pain.

### ○ Numbness and tingling

Along with pain, individuals with sciatica may experience numbness, tingling, or a pins-and-needles sensation in the leg or foot.

### ○ Muscle weakness

In severe cases, sciatica can cause muscle weakness, making it difficult to move the affected leg or foot.

### ○ Worsening of symptoms

Symptoms may worsen with prolonged sitting, standing, sneezing, or coughing, as these actions can increase pressure on the sciatic nerve.

## Diagnosis

A healthcare professional will typically diagnose sciatica based on the individual's symptoms, medical history, and a physical examination. Imaging tests such as X-rays, MRI, or CT scans may be ordered to identify the underlying cause of the sciatica.

## How can Healand help with sciatica pain

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We offer a range of therapies that can help with sciatica pain caused by the various mechanisms described above. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Migraine

A migraine is a type of headache disorder characterized by recurrent episodes of moderate to severe headaches. It is a neurological condition that affects millions of people worldwide. Migraines often involve pulsating or throbbing pain, typically on one side of the head, and can be accompanied by other symptoms. Here's an overview of migraines:

### Causes

The exact cause of migraines is not fully understood. However, several factors are believed to contribute to the development of migraines, including:

- **Genetics**

Migraines tend to run in families, suggesting a genetic predisposition.

- **Triggers**

Certain triggers can provoke migraines in susceptible individuals. Common triggers include hormonal changes (in women, migraines may be related to menstrual cycles), certain foods or food additives (such as aged cheese, chocolate, caffeine, or artificial sweeteners), stress, lack of sleep, environmental factors (bright lights, loud noises), changes in weather or barometric pressure, and certain medications.

- **Neurochemical imbalances**

Imbalances in brain chemicals, such as serotonin, may play a role in the development of migraines. Changes in serotonin levels can affect blood vessels and cause pain.

### Symptoms

Migraines are more than just headaches. They often involve other symptoms, which can vary from person to person and from episode to episode. Common symptoms of migraines include:

- **Headache**

Migraine headaches are usually moderate to severe and often have a pulsating or throbbing quality. They typically affect one side of the head but can occur on both sides. The pain is often worsened by physical activity and may last from a few hours to several days.

- **Aura**

Some individuals may experience an aura before or during a migraine attack. Auras are usually visual disturbances that can include flickering lights, zigzag lines, blind spots, or temporary loss of vision. Auras may also involve sensory or language disturbances.

- **Sensitivity to light, sound, and smell**

During a migraine attack, many people become sensitive to bright lights, loud noises, and certain smells. These stimuli can worsen the headache pain and overall discomfort.

- **Nausea and vomiting**

Migraines are frequently associated with gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite.

- **Fatigue and mood changes**

Migraines can cause fatigue and affect mood, leading to irritability, depression, or anxiety.

## Diagnosis and Treatment

Diagnosing migraines involves a thorough medical history and physical examination to rule out other possible causes of headaches. Keeping a headache diary to track the frequency, duration, and triggers of migraines can be helpful.

Treatment for migraines focuses on two main approaches: prevention and acute relief.

- **Prevention**

For individuals with frequent or severe migraines, preventive medications may be prescribed to reduce the frequency and severity of attacks. These can include medications originally developed for other conditions, such as beta-blockers, anticonvulsants, tricyclic antidepressants, or CGRP inhibitors.

- **Acute relief**

When a migraine attack occurs, acute medications can be used to alleviate the pain and associated symptoms. These can include over-the-counter pain relievers (such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, NSAIDs), triptans, ergotamine derivatives, or anti-nausea medications.

Additionally, lifestyle modifications may be recommended to manage migraines. These can include identifying and avoiding triggers, maintaining a regular sleep schedule, managing stress through relaxation techniques or counseling, regular exercise, and ensuring a healthy diet.

### How can Healand help with Migraines

We offer a range of therapies that can help with migraines. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.





## Sports injuries

Sports injuries refer to injuries that occur during athletic activities or while participating in sports. These injuries can range from mild sprains and strains to more severe fractures, dislocations, or concussions. Sports injuries can affect various parts of the body, including the muscles, bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, and soft tissues. Here's an overview of sports injuries:

### Types of Sports Injuries

- **Sprains**

Sprains occur when ligaments, which connect bones to each other, are stretched or torn. Ankle sprains are particularly common in sports.

- **Strains**

Strains involve the stretching or tearing of muscles or tendons, which connect muscles to bones. Hamstring strains and groin strains are examples of common strains in sports.

- **Fractures**

Fractures refer to broken bones. Stress fractures, which are small cracks in the bone, can occur due to repetitive stress or overuse. Acute fractures can result from sudden impact or trauma during sports.

- **Dislocations**

Dislocations happen when the bones in a joint are forced out of their normal positions. Common joints prone to dislocations include the shoulder, elbow, and finger joints.

- **Concussions**

Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury that can occur due to a blow or jolt to the head. They are common in contact sports and can cause a range of symptoms, including headache, dizziness, confusion, and memory problems.

- **Tendonitis**

Tendonitis refers to inflammation or irritation of a tendon, which can be caused by repetitive motions or overuse. It commonly affects the tendons in the shoulders, elbows, and knees.

- **Bursitis**

Bursitis involves inflammation of the bursae, small fluid-filled sacs that cushion the joints. Overuse or trauma can lead to bursitis, which commonly affects the knees, elbows, and shoulders.

### How can Healand help with sports injuries

At Healand Clinic we will not manage fractures and dislocations. We have a range of therapies that can help with ongoing pains from sprains, strains, tendonitis, and bursitis. Please book a consultation for any further information.



## Chronic abdominal pain

Chronic abdominal pain is pain in the abdomen that lasts for at least three months or longer. It can be caused by various medical conditions, such as digestive disorders, infections, inflammation, or structural abnormalities. Chronic abdominal pain can be a challenging condition to diagnose and manage, as there are many possible underlying causes. Here are some possible causes and treatments of chronic abdominal pain:

### Causes

- **Gastrointestinal disorders**

Conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) can cause chronic abdominal pain.

- **Chronic pancreatitis**

Inflammation of the pancreas can cause recurrent episodes of abdominal pain.

- **Peptic ulcers**

Sores in the stomach lining or small intestine can cause chronic abdominal pain.

- **Gallbladder disease**

Gallstones or inflammation of the gallbladder can cause chronic pain in the upper right abdomen.

- **Endometriosis**

A condition where the tissue lining the uterus grows outside the uterus, leading to chronic pelvic pain and abdominal pain.

- **Kidney stones**

Hard deposits that form in the kidneys can cause severe pain in the lower abdomen and back.

## Treatments

### ○ Medications

Over-the-counter pain relievers, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen, can help alleviate mild to moderate chronic abdominal pain. Prescription medications, such as antispasmodics or proton pump inhibitors, may be used to manage specific underlying conditions.

### ○ Dietary changes

Eliminating or reducing certain foods, such as fatty or spicy foods, can help alleviate abdominal pain associated with digestive disorders.

### ○ Stress management

Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, or cognitive-behavioural therapy may be helpful in managing abdominal pain associated with stress.

### ○ Surgery

In cases where underlying conditions such as gallstones, hernias, or endometriosis are causing chronic abdominal pain, surgery may be necessary.

### ○ Novel therapies

Therapies such as medicinal cannabis, ketamine therapy, etc. have shown to help control the pain caused by chronic abdominal pain.

### ○ Alternative therapies

Acupuncture, massage therapy, or herbal remedies may provide some relief for chronic abdominal pain, although the evidence for their effectiveness is limited.

It is important to seek medical attention if chronic abdominal pain persists, worsens, or is accompanied by other symptoms such as fever, vomiting, or blood in the stool. You may need diagnostic tests, such as blood tests, imaging studies, or endoscopic procedures, to determine the underlying cause of your pain and develop a personalized treatment plan.

## How can Healand help with chronic abdominal pain

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We offer a range of therapies that can help with chronic abdominal pain. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia is a chronic disorder characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances, and cognitive difficulties. It is considered a central nervous system disorder, and its exact cause is unknown. Fibromyalgia is a complex condition that can significantly impact a person's quality of life. Here's an overview of fibromyalgia:

### Symptoms

- **Widespread pain**

The primary symptom of fibromyalgia is widespread pain that affects multiple areas of the body, including the muscles, joints, and soft tissues. The pain is often described as a deep ache, burning sensation, or throbbing.

- **Fatigue**

People with fibromyalgia often experience persistent fatigue, even after getting adequate rest. Fatigue can be debilitating and may interfere with daily activities.

- **Sleep disturbances**

Sleep problems are common in fibromyalgia. Individuals may have difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or experience non-restorative sleep, leading to daytime fatigue.

- **Cognitive difficulties**

Often referred to as "fibro fog," cognitive difficulties are common in fibromyalgia. This can include problems with memory, concentration, attention, and mental clarity.

- **Sensitivity to stimuli**

People with fibromyalgia may be highly sensitive to various stimuli, such as light, noise, temperature changes, and touch. This heightened sensitivity can worsen pain and discomfort.

- **Other symptoms**

Additional symptoms may include headaches, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ), anxiety, depression, numbness or tingling in the extremities, and sensitivity to cold or heat.

## Diagnosis

Diagnosing fibromyalgia can be challenging, as there is no specific test or biomarker for the condition. Diagnosis is typically based on the presence of widespread pain lasting for at least three months and the exclusion of other underlying medical conditions with similar symptoms. Healthcare professionals may perform a physical examination, review medical history, and conduct specific diagnostic criteria, such as the widespread pain index (WPI) and symptom severity scale (SSS).

## Treatment

The treatment of fibromyalgia aims to alleviate symptoms and improve quality of life. It often involves a multidisciplinary approach, including the following:

### ○ Medications

Certain medications may be prescribed to manage pain, improve sleep, and address associated symptoms. These may include analgesics, antidepressants, anticonvulsants, muscle relaxants, and sleep aids.

### ○ Physical therapy

Gentle exercises, stretching, and low-impact aerobic activities prescribed by a physical therapist can help improve muscle strength, flexibility, and overall well-being. Heat therapy, massage, and relaxation techniques may also be beneficial.

### ○ Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

CBT can help individuals manage the emotional and psychological impact of fibromyalgia. It focuses on developing coping strategies, stress reduction, and changing negative thought patterns.

### ○ Sleep management

Establishing good sleep habits, creating a sleep-friendly environment, and addressing sleep disturbances can help improve sleep quality.

### ○ Stress management

Stress reduction techniques, such as mindfulness meditation, deep breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques, can help manage stress levels and improve symptoms.

- **Lifestyle modifications**

Maintaining a balanced diet, engaging in regular physical activity, pacing activities, and practicing stress management techniques can contribute to overall well-being and symptom management.

It's important for individuals with fibromyalgia to work closely with healthcare professionals to develop a personalized treatment plan. Fibromyalgia requires ongoing management, and a multidisciplinary approach can help address the complex nature of the condition.

### How can Healand help with fibromyalgia

We offer a range of therapies that can help with fibromyalgia pain. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Rheumatoid arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune disease that primarily affects the joints. It is characterized by inflammation of the synovium, the tissue lining the joints, leading to joint pain, stiffness, and swelling. Rheumatoid arthritis can also affect other organs and systems in the body. Here's an overview of rheumatoid arthritis:

### Causes

The exact cause of rheumatoid arthritis is unknown, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic, environmental, and immune system factors. In individuals with a genetic predisposition, certain triggers, such as infections or hormonal changes, may activate the immune system, leading to an autoimmune response. This autoimmune response mistakenly attacks the body's own tissues, including the synovium, causing inflammation and joint damage.

### Symptoms

#### ○ Joint pain and stiffness

The hallmark symptom of rheumatoid arthritis is joint pain and stiffness, often affecting multiple joints symmetrically. Morning stiffness lasting for more than an hour is a common feature.

#### ○ Joint swelling and tenderness

Inflammation of the synovium leads to joint swelling, tenderness, and warmth. The affected joints may appear red and feel tender to the touch.

#### ○ Fatigue

Many individuals with rheumatoid arthritis experience persistent fatigue, which can interfere with daily activities.

#### ○ Systemic symptoms

Rheumatoid arthritis can affect other organs and systems in the body, leading to symptoms such as low-grade fever, loss of appetite, weight loss, and general malaise.

#### ○ Joint deformities

Over time, rheumatoid arthritis can cause joint deformities and changes in joint alignment, leading to impaired function and mobility.



## Diagnosis

Diagnosing rheumatoid arthritis involves a combination of clinical evaluation, medical history, and laboratory tests. Healthcare professionals may assess the pattern and duration of joint symptoms, perform a physical examination, and order blood tests to check for specific markers of inflammation and autoimmunity, such as rheumatoid factor (RF) and anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide (anti-CCP) antibodies. Imaging tests, such as X-rays or ultrasound, may be used to evaluate joint damage and monitor disease progression.

## Treatment

The treatment of rheumatoid arthritis aims to control inflammation, relieve symptoms, slow down joint damage, and improve quality of life. The approach often involves a combination of medication, physical therapy, and lifestyle modifications.

## How can Healand help with rheumatoid arthritis

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We offer a range of therapies that can help with pain and inflammation caused by rheumatoid arthritis. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Psoriatic arthritis

Psoriatic arthritis (PsA) is a type of inflammatory arthritis that affects some people with psoriasis, a chronic skin condition characterized by scaly patches and redness. PsA can cause joint pain, stiffness, and swelling, as well as skin and nail changes. Here's an overview of psoriatic arthritis:

### Causes

The exact cause of psoriatic arthritis is unknown, but like other types of arthritis, it is believed to involve a combination of genetic, environmental, and immune system factors. In individuals with a genetic predisposition, certain triggers, such as infections or injury, may activate the immune system, leading to inflammation and joint damage.

### Symptoms

#### ○ Joint pain and stiffness

Psoriatic arthritis can cause pain, stiffness, and swelling in the joints, often affecting the fingers, toes, wrists, ankles, and lower back. The joint pain may be worse in the morning or after periods of inactivity.

#### ○ Skin and nail changes

Some people with psoriatic arthritis also have psoriasis, which can cause scaly patches and redness on the skin, particularly on the elbows, knees, scalp, and lower back. Psoriatic arthritis can also cause nail changes, such as pitting, thickening, and separation from the nail bed.

#### ○ Fatigue

Many individuals with psoriatic arthritis experience persistent fatigue, which can interfere with daily activities.

#### ○ Eye problems

In some cases, psoriatic arthritis can cause inflammation in the eyes, leading to redness, pain, and blurred vision.

#### ○ Joint deformities

Over time, psoriatic arthritis can cause joint deformities and changes in joint alignment, leading to impaired function and mobility.

## Diagnosis

Diagnosing psoriatic arthritis can be challenging because the symptoms can overlap with other types of arthritis and skin conditions. Healthcare professionals may assess the pattern and duration of joint symptoms, perform a physical examination, and order blood tests to check for specific markers of inflammation and autoimmunity, such as rheumatoid factor (RF) and anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide (anti-CCP) antibodies. Imaging tests, such as X-rays or ultrasound, may be used to evaluate joint damage and monitor disease progression.

## Treatment

The treatment of psoriatic arthritis aims to control inflammation, relieve symptoms, slow down joint damage, and improve quality of life. The approach often involves a combination of medication, physical therapy, and lifestyle modifications.

### How can Healand help with psoriatic arthritis

We offer a range of therapies that can help with pain and inflammation caused by psoriatic arthritis. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.



## Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common form of arthritis and is characterized by the degeneration and breakdown of the joint cartilage. It primarily affects the joints in the hands, knees, hips, and spine, although it can occur in other joints as well.

Osteoarthritis typically develops gradually and worsens over time. Here's an overview of osteoarthritis:

### Causes

The exact cause of osteoarthritis is not fully understood, but several factors can contribute to its development:

- **Aging**

As people age, the cartilage in their joints naturally undergoes wear and tear, making it more susceptible to damage.

- **Joint injury**

Previous joint injuries, such as fractures, ligament tears, or dislocations, can increase the risk of developing osteoarthritis.

- **Joint overuse**

Repetitive movements or activities that put excessive stress on the joints, such as certain occupations or sports, can contribute to the development of osteoarthritis.

- **Obesity**

Being overweight or obese puts extra stress on the joints, particularly the weight-bearing joints like the knees and hips, increasing the risk of osteoarthritis.

- **Genetic factors**

Certain genes may make individuals more prone to developing osteoarthritis.

## Symptoms

### ○ Joint pain

The primary symptom of osteoarthritis is joint pain, which typically worsens with activity and improves with rest. The pain may be described as a dull ache or stiffness in the affected joint.

### ○ Joint stiffness

Stiffness in the affected joint, especially after periods of inactivity, is common in osteoarthritis. It usually improves with movement.

### ○ Joint swelling

The affected joint may appear swollen, and there may be a feeling of warmth or tenderness.

### ○ Reduced range of motion

Osteoarthritis can limit the joint's ability to move fully, leading to a decreased range of motion.

### ○ Joint instability

In advanced stages of osteoarthritis, the affected joint may feel unstable or give way.

### ○ Bone spurs

Osteoarthritis can lead to the development of bone spurs, which are bony projections that can form around the joint.

## Treatment

The treatment of osteoarthritis aims to relieve pain, improve joint function, and enhance overall quality of life. The approach often involves a combination of the following:

### ○ Medications

- Over-the-counter pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), can help reduce pain and inflammation.
- Topical creams or ointments containing NSAIDs or capsaicin may be applied directly to the affected joint for localized pain relief.

- In some cases, corticosteroid injections into the joint may be recommended for short-term pain relief.

- **Physical therapy**

A physical therapist can provide exercises and techniques to strengthen the muscles around the affected joint, improve flexibility, and reduce pain. They may also use modalities such as heat or cold therapy.

- **Assistive devices**

The use of assistive devices, such as braces, splints, or canes, can help support the joint, relieve pressure, and improve mobility.

- **Lifestyle modifications**

- **Regular exercise**

Low-impact exercises, such as walking, swimming, or cycling, can help improve joint function, reduce pain, and maintain a healthy weight.

- **Weight management**

Maintaining a healthy weight can help reduce stress on the joints and slow down the progression of osteoarthritis.

- **Joint protection**

Avoiding activities that worsen joint pain and using proper body mechanics can help protect the joints.

## How can Healand help with osteoarthritis

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We offer a range of therapies that can help with pain and inflammation caused by osteoarthritis. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Nerve pain or Neuropathic pain

Neuropathic pain refers to pain caused by damage or dysfunction in the nervous system. Unlike nociceptive pain, which occurs in response to tissue damage or inflammation, neuropathic pain arises from abnormal signaling in the nerves themselves. It can be chronic and persistent, often presenting as shooting, burning, tingling, or electric shock-like sensations. Here's an overview of neuropathic pain:

### Causes

Neuropathic pain can have various underlying causes, including:

- **Nerve injuries**

Trauma, such as accidents, surgical procedures, or nerve compression, can lead to nerve damage and subsequent neuropathic pain.

- **Diseases or conditions**

Certain diseases, such as diabetes, multiple sclerosis, shingles (herpes zoster), HIV/AIDS, and cancer, can cause nerve damage and result in neuropathic pain.

- **Nerve entrapment**

Conditions like carpal tunnel syndrome, where a nerve gets compressed or trapped, can cause neuropathic pain.

- **Spinal cord injury**

Damage to the spinal cord can lead to neuropathic pain below the level of the injury.

- **Medications or treatments**

Some medications, such as certain chemotherapy drugs or antiretroviral medications, can cause nerve damage and result in neuropathic pain as a side effect.

## Symptoms

Neuropathic pain can manifest in various ways, including:

- **Shooting or stabbing pain**

People often describe neuropathic pain as shooting, stabbing, or like an electric shock.

- **Burning or tingling sensations**

Some individuals experience a persistent burning or tingling sensation, similar to pins and needles.

- **Hypersensitivity**

Affected areas may become hypersensitive, where even a gentle touch or slight pressure can trigger intense pain.

- **Allodynia**

Allodynia refers to the experience of pain from stimuli that are not typically painful, such as light touch or temperature changes.

- **Numbness**

In some cases, neuropathic pain can be accompanied by numbness or a loss of sensation in the affected area.

## Diagnosis and Treatment

Diagnosing neuropathic pain can be challenging, as it relies on careful assessment of symptoms and medical history. A thorough physical examination and diagnostic tests, such as nerve conduction studies or imaging, may be performed to identify any underlying nerve damage or disease.

Treatment options for neuropathic pain aim to provide relief and improve quality of life. These may include:

- **Medications**

- **Antidepressants**

Certain antidepressant medications, such as tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs) or selective serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), can help alleviate neuropathic pain by modulating nerve signals.



- **Anticonvulsants**

Medications originally developed to treat seizures, such as gabapentin or pregabalin, can effectively reduce neuropathic pain by stabilizing nerve activity.

- **Topical medications**

Localized treatments, such as lidocaine patches or capsaicin creams, may provide relief for specific areas of neuropathic pain.

- **Opioids**

In some cases, opioids may be prescribed for severe neuropathic pain that does not respond to other treatments. However, caution should be exercised due to the risk of dependency and side effects.

- **Physical therapy**

Techniques such as transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) or physical therapy exercises may help reduce pain and improve nerve function.

- **Nerve blocks or injections**

In certain situations, injecting an anesthetic or corticosteroid medication near the affected nerve can provide temporary pain relief.

- **Complementary approaches**

Some individuals find relief through complementary therapies like acupuncture, massage, or relaxation techniques. These approaches may help manage pain.

## How can Healand help with neuropathic pain

We offer a range of therapies that can help with neuropathic pain. Please book a consultation to discuss this further with us.

## Diabetic foot

Diabetic foot refers to a group of complications that can arise in individuals with diabetes due to nerve damage (neuropathy) and reduced blood circulation (peripheral arterial disease). Diabetes can lead to long-term high blood sugar levels, which can cause damage to the nerves and blood vessels, particularly in the lower extremities. Here's an overview of diabetic foot and its complications:

### Causes

Diabetic foot complications can develop due to the following factors:

- **Neuropathy**

High blood sugar levels can damage the nerves, leading to peripheral neuropathy. Peripheral neuropathy can cause loss of sensation, particularly in the feet, making it difficult to detect injuries or infections.

- **Peripheral arterial disease (PAD)**

Diabetes can also contribute to the development of peripheral arterial disease, a condition characterized by reduced blood flow to the extremities. Poor circulation impairs the healing process and increases the risk of infections.

### Complications

Diabetic foot can result in various complications, including:

- **Foot ulcers**

Reduced sensation and poor circulation can lead to the formation of foot ulcers, which are open sores that often occur on the bottom of the foot. These ulcers can be slow to heal and are prone to infection.

- **Infections**

Due to compromised blood flow and weakened immune responses, foot ulcers can easily become infected. In severe cases, infections can spread to the bones (osteomyelitis) or surrounding tissues (cellulitis).

- **Gangrene**

Severe infections or inadequate blood flow can cause tissue death, leading to gangrene. Gangrene may require surgical intervention, such as amputation, to prevent the spread of infection.

- **Charcot foot**

Charcot foot is a condition where the bones and joints of the foot collapse due to neuropathy. It can result in deformities and instability, making walking difficult.

## Prevention and Management

Preventing and effectively managing diabetic foot complications are crucial. Here are some strategies:

- **Blood sugar control**

Keeping blood sugar levels within the target range can help prevent or delay the onset of diabetic foot complications.

- **Foot care**

- **Daily foot inspections**

Regularly inspect your feet for any cuts, sores, redness, swelling, or other abnormalities. Use a mirror if needed or seek assistance from a caregiver.

- **Proper hygiene**

Wash your feet daily with mild soap and lukewarm water, ensuring to dry them thoroughly, especially between the toes.

- **Moisturize**

Apply a moisturizer to keep the skin of your feet hydrated, but avoid applying it between the toes to prevent excessive moisture build-up.

- **Trim nails carefully**

Trim your toenails straight across, avoiding sharp corners, and file the edges to prevent ingrown nails.

- **Proper footwear**

Wear well-fitting shoes that provide adequate support and cushioning. Avoid tight or pointed-toe shoes and opt for breathable materials.

- **Protect your feet**

Wear socks and shoes at all times, even indoors, to prevent injuries.

- **Avoid extreme temperatures**

Protect your feet from excessive cold or heat to prevent damage.

- **Regular foot examinations**

Schedule regular foot examinations with a healthcare professional to monitor any changes, detect problems early, and receive appropriate treatment.

- **Smoking cessation**

Smoking reduces blood flow and impairs wound healing. Quitting smoking can significantly improve overall foot health.

- **Medical care**

- If you notice any signs of foot ulcers, infections, or other abnormalities, seek prompt medical attention.
- A healthcare professional may provide wound care, prescribe appropriate medications (such as antibiotics), or recommend advanced treatments like debridement (removal of dead tissue) or hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

Remember, proper management of diabetes, foot care, and regular monitoring are essential for preventing diabetic foot complications and maintaining foot health.

## How can Healand help with diabetic foot and foot ulcers

We offer a range of therapies that can help increase healing and relieve pain from diabetic feet. Please make a booking with us for further information.