

APC NEWS

CELEBRATING 15 Years!

Starting in 2001, at a location in Daniel Village on Wrightsboro Road, the Augusta Pain Center has been growing. The last 15 years have brought many changes at APC, as well as in the field of Interventional Pain Management.



In 2010, the new construction of the state-of-the-art Epicenter was completed at the current location at Interstate and Perimeter Parkway near Doctors Hospital. Five times larger than the original facility, the office has 15,000 square feet, a Joint Commission-accredited surgical center, physical and aquatic therapy and now has 30 employees. It is a facility designed specifically for the chronic pain patient.



Since opening APC in 2001, Richard Epter, M.D., Medical Director, has introduced the application of new interventional pain management advancements, such as fluoroscopy, which has increased safety and accuracy during procedures. Spinal cord stimulation has made great strides with the use of rechargeable batteries and the use of multiple leads allowing more chronic pain conditions to be treated. And regenerative therapies offer a way to stimulate and accelerate the body's natural ability to heal itself.



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*Here's to 15 years of helping patients be
Pain-Free at APC!*

What is Behavioral Pain Management and why is Pain Therapy Important to Me?

Individuals with chronic pain are significantly more likely to become depressed and/or anxious. People with mood disturbances are more likely to experience chronic pain when injured or experiencing long-term illness. When a person has both chronic pain and mood disturbance, they are more likely to increase reliance on passive, unhealthy coping strategies leading to a sense of powerlessness or hopelessness. Also, those with chronic pain often become afraid of doing further harm to themselves by

participating in everyday activities. The "fear of movement," also called kinesiophobia, decreases functional ability and quality of life. Research suggests that chronic untreated pain can reduce the size of your brain equivalent to 20 years of age (Foreman, 2014).

What Can Behavioral Pain Management Teach Me?

Learn healthy diversion techniques that shift your attention away from the pain, how to manipulate your body's response to pain through biofeedback, how to curb negative, catastrophic thinking in favor of healthier, adaptive thoughts, how to gradually increase your tolerance for activities normally prohibited by pain, how to identify and avoid bad coping behaviors, which can become habitual and contribute to pain (Barr, 2008), learn about pain and learn how it affects your body and behavior, and learn about things you should not do to adapt to a life with chronic pain.

Why is a Behavioral Evaluation Necessary for Me?

A behavioral health evaluation is a requirement for most patients. It allows for more time to explore your history and specific needs to a level that would not be possible with a normal medical evaluation. This allows your doctor to pursue the best treatment plan available. It is generally known that not everybody responds the same way to treatment. This is why one person may respond well to a particular intervention while another may not. A behavioral health evaluation uses the most up-to-date research to help guide your doctor in designing a treatment plan that will have the best outcome results with the least risk.

A person does not need to be "perfect" to benefit from higher risk forms of treatment like narcotic pain medication. However, the law requires due diligence when prescribing such medications. A behavioral health evaluation helps the doctor identify a patient's assets or liabilities in order to lessen concerns which may become a barrier to prescribing these types of medications.

References

Barr, K. 2008. Mind and your body: Pain, pain, go away. Psychology Today. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200803/mind-your-body-pain-pain-go-away>
Foreman, F. 2014. Chronic pain: Millions suffer, missing non-drug option. Retrieved from <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/02/02/chronic-pain-treatment/4737647/>
Depression and pain (2004). Harvard Mental Health Letter, Retrieved from health.harvard.edu/newsweek/Depression_and_pain
Hadley, E. (2009). Chronic pain: The relationship between physical and psychological health. Retrieved from http://www.med.upenn.edu/psychotherapy/newsletter_pain.html



Where Lower Back Pain Begins



Overview: Lower back pain is a common problem that severely impacts the quality of your life. It can limit your ability to be active. It can cause you to miss work. Many different causes may lead to pain in your lower back.

About the Lumbar Spine: Let's learn about the structure of the lumbar spine to better understand back pain. Your lumbar spine is your lower back. There are five lumbar vertebrae. Between those vertebrae there are discs. They cushion the bones and allow the spine to bend and twist.

Spinal Nerves: The spine protects the spinal nerves. These travel through a space called the spinal canal. Branches of spinal nerves exit the spine through spaces on both sides of the spine.

Common Causes of Pain: In many cases, back pain is caused by muscle or ligament strains. This can happen if you spend a day doing heavy lifting. But back pain can also be caused by compression of the spinal nerves. Herniated discs or bone growths caused by osteoarthritis can press against the nerves. Fractures of the spine can reduce the amount of space around them. This type of pain may not go away, even after weeks.

Symptoms: Symptoms of back pain can vary depending on the cause of your pain and the severity of your injury. You may have trouble bending or twisting your back. You may feel a dull ache or a stabbing pain. The pain may radiate down to one or both legs. It may cause weakness, numbness or tingling.

Treatment: At APC, Interventional pain procedures that may be performed for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes include epidural steroid injections, selective nerve root blocks, sympathetic nerve procedures, radiofrequency lesioning, lysis of epidural adhesions, intradiscal procedures, and spinal cord stimulation. Physical therapy and Behavioral techniques may also be used to manage pain.

6 Yoga Poses to Relieve Lower Back Pain



FORWARD BEND

CAT

CHILD



PIGEON

DOWNWARD-FACING DOG

UPWARD-FACING DOG

Nutritional Tips

Foods that help reduce inflammation:

- Flax and chia seeds
- Omega 3-rich coldwater fish like salmon, mackerel, sardines, herring, black cod, tuna, and trout
- Naturally pigmented produce such as carrots, beets, sweet potatoes, cherries, berries, grapes and red wine, pomegranate, and watermelon
- Herbs and spices, including basil, cinnamon, ginger, rosemary, garlic, curcumin, onions, oregano, and turmeric, as well as herb teas and true teas (green, oolong, and white)
- Avocados, nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, Brazil nuts)
- Lean proteins, such as chicken and turkey
- Beans
- Cocoa

Foods that fuel inflammation:

- Processed foods, fast foods, and saturated fats, including white bread, pasta, rice, sugary drinks and snacks, fried foods, and anything with partially hydrogenated oil in the ingredients
- Caffeine
- Alcohol

APC STAFF NEWS

Work Anniversaries and New Hires

April: Tysheika Adams, Surgery Center receptionist - 4 yrs., Jessica Davis, PA-C - 1 yr., Brooke Willis, Marketing Director- Hired

May: Vickey Partlow, MA - 5 yrs., Tyler Brown, M.S. - 3 yrs., Wendy Carson, Patient Accounts - 1 yr.

June: Richard S. Epter, MD/Founder - 15 yrs., Jessica Epter, Insurance Authorizations - 6 yrs., Natasha Edwards, MS - 2 yrs., MaryRose Hinson, Check-out receptionist - 2 yrs., Jeanine Wethal, Insurance authorizations - 1 yr., Dawn Neely, Patient Accounts - Hired, Jessica Lewis, LPN - Hired

Chronic Pain Social Support Group

The goals of this group include providing support, validation, and education in basic pain management and life skills (i.e. medication, treatment types, etc.)
Meeting every 1st & 3rd Friday
10:30a-11:30a
Please call to RSVP and check for cancellations.



1321 Interstate Parkway
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Hours:

Monday - Thursday
7:00 am – 4:30 pm
Friday
8:00 am – 2:00 pm

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Augusta Pain Center Quarterly Newsletter
July 2016 Edition
www.AugustaPainCenter.com

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APC in the Community

Dr. Epter had the opportunity to speak to several community organizations from April to June, including the April Augusta AMBUCS meeting, University Hospital's Noon Conference in April, the May meeting of the South Augusta Exchange Club, as well as the June meeting of the Columbia County Exchange Club. At the May meeting of the Augusta Exchange Club Dr. DeAngelo presented to the group, and at all these engagements, our physicians addressed the topic of Interventional Pain Management.



The Marketing Director of APC, Brooke Willis, was selected to participate in the GeorgiaForward's Fall 2016 Class of the Young Gamechangers, a leadership action program that brings together 50 of Georgia's brightest minds under the age of 40, to help solve persistent challenges of one Georgia community.



In May, APC was recognized as the newest corporate member of the Fort Gordon Chapter of the Association of the United States Army.