

# APC NEWS



## When is it time to see an Interventional Pain Physician?

Chronic pain is not easy to ignore, nor should it be ignored. It can affect your daily routine, your career, your sleep habits, your emotional well-being, even your relationships. While some aches come and go, chronic pain persists for 3 to 6 months or more. It can be a result of normal aging in the bones and joints, disease, nerve damage from an injury that didn't heal correctly, or instead of one single factor, it could be a combination of factors. There are many possible causes of chronic pain, and many options for treatment, but one important question is... "When is it time to see an Interventional Pain Physician?"

Richard S. Epter, M.D., Medical Director of the Augusta Pain Center is an Interventional Pain Management Physician with over 30 years of experience. "As an interventional pain management specialist, I seek to identify the cause of the patient's pain so that we can eliminate it or control it with as minimal medication usage as possible," says Dr. Epter.

The timing of when you are evaluated and decide with your physician on a course of treatment can greatly affect the outcome.

Ideally, chronic pain should be evaluated as early as possible. Waiting until the pain is too severe could make it harder to control. Also, underlying problems causing the pain could require immediate medical attention and stem from a much larger health concern. It is especially important to see a pain physician before resorting to taking narcotic medications for a long time or undergoing multiple invasive procedures or surgery without knowing the cause of the pain.

However, if your chronic pain has persisted for years, or if you have had previous surgeries or been on a medication regimen to eliminate the pain that were ineffective or even created additional pain generators, it is not too late. Dr. Epter works with patients, referring physicians and other specialists to establish an accurate diagnosis. Because the Augusta Pain Center is a multi-disciplinary practice, we integrate a combination of therapies, such as physical therapy, aquatic therapy, interventional procedures, behavioral therapy and medication. Our facility is state-of-the-art and offers diagnostic and therapeutic procedures under the guidance of ultrasound or fluoroscopy to maximize accuracy and results.



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Advances in spinal cord stimulation and radiofrequency ablation, as well as cutting edge Regenerative Injection Therapies, such as Stem Cell Therapy and Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy, which are not commonly offered by other pain management practices in the area offer patients of Augusta Pain Center more options than ever before.

So, when is it time to see an Interventional Pain Physician for pain that has persisted for months or years? The answer is now. Don't let pain stop you from living your life to the fullest. *To discuss treatment options and learn more about our diagnostic and state-of-the-art procedures, please call Augusta Pain Center at (706) 738-PAIN and make an appointment with one of our providers.*

## PUMPKIN SEEDS

### A cornucopia of health benefits

- Full of antioxidants that may help protect against disease and reduce inflammation.
- Rich source of magnesium. Healthy magnesium levels are important for your blood pressure, heart health, bone health and blood sugar levels.
- Whole pumpkin seeds are an excellent source of fiber. Diets high in fiber are associated with many health benefits, including a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes and obesity
- Pumpkin seeds are a good source of tryptophan, zinc and magnesium, all of which help promote good sleep.



<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/11-benefits-of-pumpkin-seeds#section11>

## Flu Season is back....

If you have an appointment at Augusta Pain Center, but are experiencing flu symptoms, please call our office to reschedule. Thank you for preventing the spread of the flu!



Feel better soon!

## APC Staff

## news

### Work Anniversaries

Oct Cynthia Mayle 7 yrs; Angela Bagrowski 3 yrs;  
Dec Lynda Henderson 9 yrs; Daniel Lucas 2 yrs

### Birthdays

Oct Elizabeth Gilmer 10/7; Tabbatha Lowery 10/8; Angela Bagrowski 10/12; Chris Scheuer 10/28  
Nov Amanda Walker 11/18; Cynthia Mayle 11/22  
Dec Natasha Edwards 12/11

## Chronic Inflammation: Too Much of a Good Thing

### PROS of INFLAMMATION

Removes damaged cells

Removes bacteria from the body

A skin blemish is an example of inflammation where your body isolates & removes bad bacteria.

**Chronic inflammation:** When your body is constantly overreacting to real and perceived threats.

CAN LEAD TO:

asthma

cancer

arthritis

heart disease



### Causes of Chronic Inflammation:

- STRESS
- ALLERGIES/FOOD SENSITIVITIES
- POOR DIET
- STRENUOUS EXERCISE

### HOW TO: FIGHT INFLAMMATION



Consume anti-inflammatory foods, such as:



broccoli



beets



berries



fish



ginger



garlic



nuts



turmeric

Engage in light to moderate cardiovascular exercise & strength training.  
(About 30 minutes a day on most days a week is all you need)



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www.worldlifestyle.com



## Procedure Spotlight:

# Radiofrequency Neurotomy of the Lumbar Facets

### Overview

During this minimally-invasive procedure, the physician uses heat from radio waves to treat painful facet joints in your lower back, mid back or neck. This procedure is also called radiofrequency rhizotomy. It can treat pain that doesn't respond to medications or to physical therapy.

### Preparation

In preparation for the procedure, you lie on your stomach. You may be given medicine to make you feel relaxed. The skin and tissue of your back is numbed. Inserting the Cannula The physician inserts a tube called a "cannula." A video x-ray device called a "fluoroscope" helps guide the cannula to the medial branch nerves in your spine. These tiny nerves carry pain signals from your facet joints to your brain.

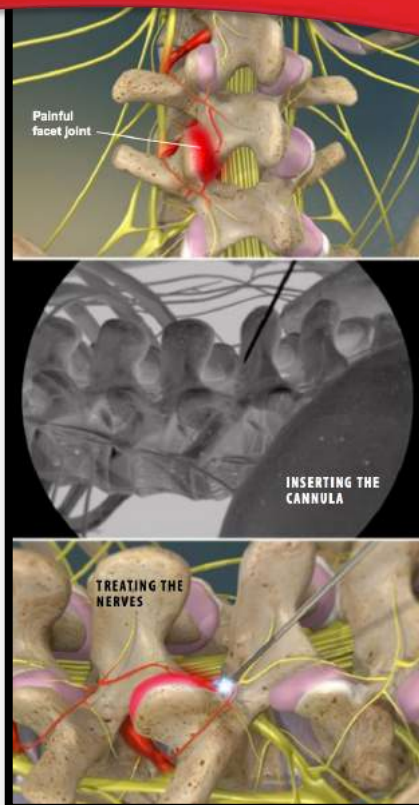
### Treating the Nerves

The physician inserts an electrode through the cannula. A small amount of electrical energy is used to test its position. Then the physician uses the electrode to heat the nerve. This disrupts its ability to transmit pain signals. Several nerves may be treated if necessary.

### End of Procedure

When the procedure is complete, the electrode and cannula are removed. A small bandage is placed on your skin. If the correct nerves were treated, you will gradually experience pain relief as you heal. This may take several weeks. Your relief may last for several months or even years.

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## HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

FOR LOVED ONES WITH CHRONIC PAIN

- \* Pharmacy Gift Cards
- \* Heating Pad or Heated Blanket
- \* Spa Gift Certificate
- \* Comfy PJ's
- \* Fitness Bracelet to Track and Encourage Exercise
- \* Aromatherapy Bath Products
- \* Services- Meals, Babysitting, Yard Work, Etc
- \* Physical Therapy Items, Such as a Foam Roller or Gym Ball

# MEDICAL ASSISTANTS

## Recognition Week

Every Third Full Week in October

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS



**Richard S. Epter, MD, DABPM, FIPP**

*Medical Director*

**William S. Schiff, Psy. D.**

*Psychologist*

1321 Interstate Parkway  
Augusta, GA 30909

**Hours:**

Monday - Thursday

7:00 am – 4:30 pm

Friday

8:00 am – 2:00 pm

**Contact Us:**

(706) 738-PAIN (7246)

Fax: (706) 738-7248

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[www.AugustaPainCenter.com](http://www.AugustaPainCenter.com)

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## APC in the Community

Augusta Pain Center participated in the CSRA Community Expo in August. The event, organized by the Fort Gordon Spouses' and Civilians' Club, is held at the Gordon Club and Catering Center and offers free admission, prizes and food to the Fort Gordon community.



July 28 was the 12th Annual Military Appreciation Night for the Augusta GreenJackets and APC was a sponsor. This was our way of saying thank you to active military and veterans, who received free admission that evening.

Photo Credit: <https://www.facebook.com/GreenJacketsBaseball>