

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Are you saying my pain is all in my head?

A: No. Your pain is real. At the same time, in addition to medication and rest, there are skills you can learn to help manage pain. Many people feel stressed, depressed, anxious or fatigued after dealing with pain for a long time, all of which can worsen pain and interfere with your daily life. CBT-CP can help.

Q: What will be expected of me?

A: You will work with your therapist to establish goals for treatment, learn about chronic pain, and practice a self-directed problem solving approach to manage and decrease problems associated with chronic pain.

Q: Who can benefit from CBT-CP?

A: CBT-CP is most effective when you are committed and motivated to engage in all aspects of the treatment. This commitment involves attending all sessions and practicing proven skills for changing thoughts, emotions and behaviors that impact your experience of chronic pain.

Q: Can I participate if I don't want to change my pain medication?

A: Yes. CBT-CP is just one component of your overall treatment plan, much like physical therapy or other treatments. Adding CBT-CP to your treatment plan can actually help you get more relief from medications and other forms of treatment. You and your therapist will typically collaborate with your pain management physician.

Who We Are

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences' Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP) trains military and civilian behavioral health professionals to provide high quality, culturally-sensitive, evidence-based behavioral health services to Service members, Veterans and their families.

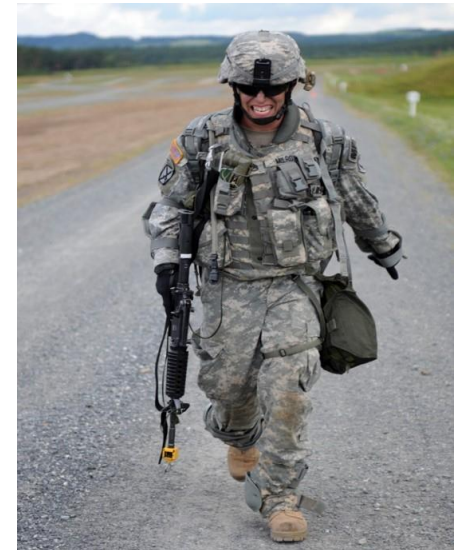


Photo by Sgt. Joel Salgado, U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs.
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pain_\(4833646403\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pain_(4833646403).jpg)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain

What is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain?

Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Chronic Pain (CBT-CP) is one of the therapies recommended by the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense that can help individuals better understand and manage their pain.

There has been an increase in the rate of chronic pain among Service members and Veterans, particularly at a younger age. Chronic pain can be experienced in different parts of the body and can be debilitating. CBT-CP helps individuals adjust to physical changes and improve quality of life.

CBT-CP has been proven to be helpful for chronic pain of any type. It is an individualized therapy that typically requires approximately 10-12 sessions, each lasting about 50-60 minutes.

Your pain severity, mood, and quality of life all interact. Unfortunately, when pain becomes unmanageable, you sometimes feel hopeless about feeling better and frustration over missing out on things in life that are important to you. When you begin treatment, you and your therapist will discuss your priorities related to your pain and its impact on your day-to-day life, and identify what will be most helpful for you in therapy.



CBT-CP is a short-term psychotherapy for treating symptoms of chronic pain, which may include:

- Regular feelings of pain, tension and discomfort
- Acute flare-ups of pain
- Limitations in daily activities and hobbies
- Worry about physical harm
- Feeling down or helpless
- Decreased self-confidence
- Irritability and frustration
- Fatigue
- Unrefreshing sleep

What are the Goals of CBT-CP?

The overall goal of CBT-CP is to improve your quality of life and reduce the interference of pain in your life. In CBT-CP you will learn to examine your thoughts and feelings surrounding pain. You will explore ways to adapt activities that are meaningful to you. In addition, you will also develop skills and techniques to help moderate your pain.

CBT-CP will help to teach you an active, problem-solving approach to manage and decrease the challenges associated with chronic pain. By learning effective strategies to cope with and mitigate pain, it is possible to change one's pain

What Will I Be Doing in CBT-CP?

Over the course of 10-12 weekly therapy sessions:

- You will learn how chronic pain develops and impacts daily living.
- You will identify potential patterns and triggers related to your pain.
- You will learn various strategies to manage your chronic pain to include relaxation exercises, activity modification, and investigation of negative thoughts and feelings related to pain.
- You will acquire skills to manage your pain outside of the office.
- You and your therapist may also coordinate with your pain management physician.