



Hendricks Community Hospital strives to serve Hendricks and our surrounding communities. To inform our area patrons, we will be publishing topics in our area newspapers about the services and specialties we offer at our local level. Various topics will be covered throughout the next several months to ensure our community is provided with the best knowledge in making their healthcare choices. Our goal is that you enjoy reading more about the services we provide and feel more confident in your decision-making.

### **Managing Pain with Physical Therapy at HCHA**

By Kennedy Tesch

Pain is your body's way of telling you that something is wrong and needs to be addressed. Whether physical or emotional, pain can have lasting effects on you and your body. Everyone experiences some type of pain in their lives, and to live a healthy life, it is important to learn how to manage the pain.

There are two types of pain, chronic and acute. Acute pain is sudden and sharp, serving as a warning sign to your body. This type of pain usually occurs as the result of a traumatic event or injury such as a broken bone or cut. Chronic pain is pain that carries on for longer than 12 weeks with or without the history of an injury or surgical operation and can continue to occur even with the use of medication or treatment.

Statistics show that over twenty percent of adults living in the United States deal with chronic pain. The annual cost of treating chronic pain is over 630 billion dollars per year, which is more than the yearly cost of diabetes, cancer, and heart disease combined. Strategies used to manage chronic pain have also played a role in the prescription drug epidemic, resulting in addictions and unintentional death.

In the last twenty years, there has been an explosion in the knowledge and understanding of pain. The science behind this has created more innovative strategies to provide pain relief that do not require costly and addictive prescription drugs. One form of pain management that Hendricks Community Hospital can provide patients is physical therapy treatment.

Regina Landrus Physical Therapist (PT), Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), Therapeutic Pain Specialist (PS), Fellow of Pain Science (FPS), is a physical therapy provider with Big Stone Therapy at Hendricks Community Hospital. Landrus has extensive training in pain and pain management. In May 2021, Landrus expanded her knowledge of pain and earned her fellowship in pain science, an advanced specialized degree with focus on treating pain of all kinds.

Your body has millions of sensors that are designed to detect threats and injuries. These sensors are part of your nervous system and relay messages up to the brain. Your brain then analyzes these messages and determines what needs to be done, producing the pain that you experience.

“The nervous system can be thought of as a volume meter,” says Regina Landrus, PT, DPT, PS, FPS, “Factors can increase the volume, creating more sensitivity and producing pain, or turned down, causing less sensitivity, and decreasing pain. The goal of therapy is to turn the volume meter down and decrease sensitivity resulting in the reduction of pain.”

Treating pain requires addressing the whole person, not just the area that hurts. Each person is unique, needing an individual treatment plan to combat the variety of factors that impact pain. The physical therapy team at HCHA will complete a thorough physical therapy examination and develop a plan designed specifically for you.

Pain treatment needs to include four main areas:

- pain science education
- sleep hygiene
- goal setting
- exercise

“These are all necessary, just like a car needs all four tires to drive down the road,” says Landrus. “These four areas are tailored specifically to you. In addition to these required pieces, there are many other options we can use to further specialize the treatment program to your needs.”

Landrus is available Monday through Friday at Hendricks Community Hospital Association. If you feel this program would be beneficial to you, please contact your medical provider for a referral. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Landrus at 507-275-2217.