

WORLD NURSING FORUM
&
13th International Conference on
RHEUMATOLOGY & TRAUMA CARE

September 02-03, 2019 | Vienna, Austria

The role of physical therapy in the treatment of patients with chronic pain

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Despite a better understanding of chronic pain during the last decade, treatment remains difficult and is often unsuccessful. Recent studies suggest that mechanisms of central pain modulation play an important role in the development of chronic pain. Knowledge on how these central pain modulatory mechanisms relate to the level and intensity of pain and how they could be influenced should be considered in the treatment of these patients.

For successful pain management a few key points should be considered:

Including biopsychosocial aspects in the thought process of the assessment of chronic pain patients.

As research shows that education of pain neurophysiology will improve the outcome of other therapeutic approaches such as various exercise strategies the patients understanding of underlying mechanisms is critical for the success of therapy.

Aim for treatment should be, to introduce the theory and evidence base for cognitive and behavioral approaches to pain management.

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