

*Tips and knowledge bombs  
to better understand your  
pain experience*

# UNDERSTANDING PAIN

## **PAIN IS YOUR ALARM SYSTEM**

Pain is not a good indicator of tissue damage. Rather it is an internal alarm system with the purpose of drawing our attention. That alarm system doesn't tell us what's wrong, rather it tells us there MAY be something wrong that we should be aware of.

## **PAIN IS NOT ONLY ABOUT DAMAGE**

Pain is essentially our body's perception of threat. It tells us if there is something potentially threatening that we may want to do something about. In chronic pain conditions, pain is rarely about tissue damage and rather about our alarm system being overly protective.

## **NOCICEPTION WHAT IS IT?**

We do not have pain receptors. Rather we have nociceptors which are receptors that pick up various sensations and send those signals to the brain via the spinal cord. It is ultimately the brain that decides if the sensations are threatening or not and if we experience pain.

## **PAIN IS MULTIFACTORIAL**

As pain is an output of the brain and not inherently in the tissues there are many things that may influence our experience with pain. These may include stress, anxiety, lack of sleep, depression, nutrition, mental health as well as our beliefs and attitudes towards pain itself.

## **SO WHAT SHOULD I DO TO HELP MY PAIN?**

You have already taken the first step, which is to understand what pain is. Step 2 is to avoid negative thoughts about your pain. Step 3 is to keep moving and doing things that are important to you, even if they are modified. Step 4 is to listen to your practitioner's advice and guidance ;)

## **HERE ARE SOME MORE RESOURCES TO FURTHER UNDERSTAND PAIN**

- Explain Pain Youtube Video
- Recovery Ebook by Greg Lehman (a leader in pain and the ebook is free and very useful)

