

# Pain Relief Connection

## The Pain Information Newsletter

Provided by MGH Cares About Pain Relief,  
a program of Patient Care Services

Archived issues are available at <http://www.MassGeneral.org/PainRelief>



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### In the News

- Medicare/Medicaid no longer recognizes [thermal intradiscal procedures](#) a reasonable treatment for back pain.
- Military & Veterans Pain Care Acts (HR 4565 & S 2162), were signed into law. The Pain Care Act of 2008 is stalled in the Senate's HELP (Health Education, Labor & Pensions) Committee ... contact them to move it.
- Acura Pharmaceuticals report a successful Phase 2 trial of [abuse-deterrent form of oxycodone](#). The technology produces harmless but unpleasant effects if injected, snorted or consumed in excess of prescribed amount.

**Journal Watch** All items are accessible via MGH computers/library; [O] = open access; [R] = free registration required) MGHers can obtain articles from journals to which Treadwell Library does not subscribe through the [Treadwell home page](#), go to 'Order Articles' under the 'Quick Picks' banner on the left.

- Tilburt JC, Emanuel EJ, Kaptchuk TJ, et al. (2008) [Prescribing "placebo treatments"](#): results of national survey of US internists and rheumatologists *BMJ* 2008;337:a1938, About half of the nearly 700 US doctors surveyed regularly recommend ineffective treatments; including OTC analgesics (prescribed by 41%).
- Cucchiari G, Xiao Y, Gonzalez-Sulser A, et al. (2008). [Analgesic effects of Sazetidine-A](#), a new nicotinic cholinergic drug. *Anesthesiology*, 109:512-9. Early animal studies suggest Sazetidine-A seems to be a potent analgesic for chronic inflammatory pain without causing neurologic side effects.
- Malik K, Benzon HT. (2008). [Radiofrequency applications to dorsal root ganglia](#): a literature review. *Anesthesiology*, 109:527-42 Increasingly used despite unclear mode of action & lack of efficacy data.
- Ilfeld BM, Ball ST, Gearen PF, et al. (2008) Ambulatory continuous [posterior lumbar plexus nerve blocks](#) after hip arthroplasty: a dual-center, randomized, triple-masked, placebo-controlled trial. *Anesthesiology*. 2008;109:491-501. After lumbar plexus nerve block, hip arthroplasty patients were discharged much sooner, but 10% fell and the infusion did not increase ambulation distance.
- Shelby RA, Somers TJ, Keefe FJ, et al. (2008). Domain-Specific [Self-Efficacy Mediates](#) the Impact of Pain Catastrophizing on Pain and Disability and Obese Osteoarthritis Patients. *Journal of Pain*, 9 (10): Patients who believe they can engage in physical activity are less fearful about pain and have less disability impairment. Pain catastrophizing produces physical disability by lowered self-efficacy for physical function and increases psychological disability through lowered self-efficacy for coping. These problems can be treated with cognitive therapy techniques to enhance self-efficacy and coping.
- Kamaleri Y, Natvig B, Ihleback CM, et al. (2008). [Localized or Widespread Musculoskeletal Pain](#): Does It Matter? *Pain*, 138 (1) Relationship between the number of pain sites and functional ability was very strong, with functional ability decreasing as the number of pain sites increased.
- Valeberg BT, Miaskowski C, Hanestad BR et al. (2008). Demographic, clinical and pain characteristics are associated with [average pain severity groups](#) in a sample of oncology outpatients. *Journal of Pain*, 9 (10): 873-882. This study validates previous research that pain over "4" (0-10 scale) is a clinically relevant cut-point above which patients have biopsychosocial problems that require more aggressive care.

MGH Cares About Pain Relief

Massachusetts General Hospital

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To be added to or removed from the *Pain Relief Connection* mailing list, send an email to [pmarnstein@partners.org](mailto:pmarnstein@partners.org)

## CAM

- Frey Law LAF, Evans S, Knudtson J, et al (2008). [Massage Reduces Pain Perception](#) and Hyperalgesia in Experimental Muscle Pain: A Randomized, Controlled Trial *Journal of Pain*, 9 (8) Massage can reduce hyperalgesia and pain and delayed the onset of exercise-induced muscle soreness.
- Furlan AD, Imamura M, Dryden T, et al. (2008). [Massage for low-back pain](#). *Cochrane Database Systematic Review*, Oct 8;(4):CD001929 Massage was superior to sham treatments, joint mobilization, relaxation, physical therapy, acupuncture and self-care education for pain reduction and functional improvement. Massage benefits were comparable to exercise, in another study, and one study showed that reflexology was ineffective. The beneficial effects of massage for chronic low-back pain lasted at least one year after the last treatment.
- Hanson LC, Dobbs D, Usher BM, et al. (2008). [Providers and Types of Spiritual Care](#) during Serious Illness. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 11 (6): 907-914. Patients receive spiritual care from various sources with modest benefits, including facilitation of understanding, or coping with illness.
- Wiech K, Farias M, Kahane G, et al. (2008) An fMRI study measuring [analgesia enhanced by religion](#) as a belief system. *Pain*, 139 (2): 467-476. Practicing Catholics perceived electrical shocks as less painful when looking and an image of the Virgin Mary ; with associated Functional MRI changes.
- Wang SM, Escalera S, Lin EC, et al. (2008). Extra-1 [acupressure for children undergoing anesthesia](#). *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, 107 (3):811-816. An acupressure bead on the forehead reduced preop anxiety.

## Pain Resources on the Web

- [Coping with chronic pain](#) on Health.com provides useful information for patients and nice video-clips
- [Emerging Solutions in Pain](#) recently release a [patient education series](#) (papers & DVDs) including one on [A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Medical Management of Sleep, Chronic Pain, and Driving](#)
- [PainTopics.org](#) has many new postings on their website. Many offer CEU or CME credit.
- Consumer Reports has done a report on the [best-buy opioid drugs](#). (reviews available for other analgesics)

## Pain-Related Education Opportunities

- Fri-Sat Nov 7-8 Washington DC Psychophysiology & Biofeedback for [Blast Injuries: TBI, PTSD & Pain](#)
- Tue-Tue Nov 11-18 Cambridge, MA Program in [Palliative Care Education and Practice \(PCEP\)](#) at Harvard
- Thu-Sun Nov 20-23 Huntington Beach, CA. [American Society of Regional Anesthesia & Pain Medicine](#)

## MGH Pain Calendar

- **Chronic Pain Rounds are held Mondays at 12:00N in the Ether Dome.** Mailing: [ttoland@partners.org](mailto:ttoland@partners.org)
- **Palliative Care Grand Rounds held Wednesdays at 8:00am in the Ether Dome.** Mail: [nalawless@partners.org](mailto:nalawless@partners.org)
- **Next Pain Relief Champion Training March 13 & 27, 2009** Contact: [pmarnstein@partners.org](mailto:pmarnstein@partners.org)

### MGH Pain Resources:

PainRelief web site: <http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/>

Previous issues of *Pain Relief Connection*: [http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Newsletter/mghpain\\_connection.htm](http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Newsletter/mghpain_connection.htm)

Previous Pain Topics articles: [http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Pain%20Topics/mghpain\\_paintopics\\_index.htm](http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Pain%20Topics/mghpain_paintopics_index.htm)

MGH Pain Resources Page: [http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/MGH\\_Pain\\_Resources.htm](http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/MGH_Pain_Resources.htm)

The MGH Center for Translational Pain Research: <http://www.massgeneral.org/painresearch/index.html>

CCPD educational offerings: [http://www.massgeneral.org/pcs/CCPD/Educational\\_Offerings/cpd\\_offerings\\_calendar.asp](http://www.massgeneral.org/pcs/CCPD/Educational_Offerings/cpd_offerings_calendar.asp)

Treadwell Library (Magic): <http://magic.mgh.harvard.edu/>

MGH Pain Medicine:

MGH Formulary (includes patient teaching handouts in 16 languages): <http://www.crlonline.com/crlsql/servlet/crlonline>

Partners Handbook: <http://is.partners.org/handbook/>

Primary Care Office InSite (PCOI) (Clinician and patient information): [http://oi.mgh.harvard.edu/pcoi/frontpage\\_frames.asp](http://oi.mgh.harvard.edu/pcoi/frontpage_frames.asp)

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