



**World Physical Therapy Day 2019**

# **CHRONIC PAIN**

**How to take part**



# This year's campaign: Chronic pain

The campaign for World Physical Therapy Day 2019 is focussed around the theme of chronic pain and the role that physical therapy and physical activity has in its management and treatment.

The campaign is focussed around the following key messages.

- Exercise as a therapy is included in all guidelines for the treatment of chronic pain.
- The brain plays an important role in chronic pain.
- It's important to dispel myths associated with chronic pain.
- Exercise is beneficial and physical therapists play an important role in developing patient-centred activity and exercise programmes.
- Physical therapists help people with chronic pain develop the skills they need to manage and take control of their condition.

WCPT encourages member organisations and physical therapists around the world to use WCPT's toolkit to convey these messages to the public and policy makers.

With chronic pain a significant global health problem, these messages are important to demonstrate how physical therapists help people manage and take control of their condition, explore long-term strategies



Macau Physical Therapists Association  
World Physical Therapy Day 2018



to build confidence and take part in life again.

## About World Physical Therapy Day

World Physical Therapy Day is held every year on 8th September, the day WCPT was founded in 1951. It is a day when physical therapists can promote the profession, its work and:

- showcase the significant role the profession makes to the health and wellbeing of the global population
- raise the profile of the profession
- campaign on behalf of the profession and its patients/clients to governments and policy makers.

The day marks the unity and solidarity of the physical therapy community around the world. It is an opportunity to recognise the work that physical therapists do for their patients and community.

WCPT aims to support its member organisations and individual physical therapists in their efforts to promote the profession and advance global health, using World Physical Therapy Day as the focus.

# Get involved

WCPT has produced a toolkit of materials to support physical therapists and their organisations in their World Physical Therapy Day activities. It includes:

- A leaflet: to distribute directly to patients and the public.
- Two posters: to display in public places.
- Three infographics: to display and distribute to patients and the public.
- A postcard: to distribute directly to the public.
- Translations: the infographics, posters, flyer and postcard are available in English, Spanish and French.
- Social media graphics: a selection of graphics will be produced for you to use on social media platforms to promote the day and this year's message.
- Information sources and additional reading: references for information within the materials and additional resources and web links about this year's campaign.
- A t-shirt design and logo: to download and get printed locally.
- Stickers: to download and print on standard printer labels.
- Banner artwork: to download and be supplied to local manufacturers.

Download the above resources for free at:  
[www.wcpt.org/wptday](http://www.wcpt.org/wptday)

## #worldptday

## What is chronic pain?

**Chronic, persistent or long-term pain** is pain that continues for longer than 3 months. It is usually defined as pain that persists **beyond the normal time** that tissues take to heal following an injury.



**Chronic pain** is a significant global **health burden**



Across the globe **low back pain** causes **more disability** than any other condition

### Main causes and conditions of chronic pain



Low back pain



Cervical and thoracic pain



Rheumatoid arthritis



Osteoarthritis



Shoulder pain



Headache disorders



Cancer



Fibromyalgia

### Facts about pain

**Acute pain** alarms us about potential tissue damage and typically comes on suddenly as a result of a specific incident such as surgery, childbirth, a fracture, or trauma.

**Chronic pain** serves no biologic purpose as it is not related to the threat of tissue damage. Chronic pain can be considered a disease state and can persist for months or years.

Pain persists in response to being overly sensitive to a perceived threat of harm to your body, despite the absence of tissue damage

### How physical therapy helps

Physical therapy helps people with chronic pain **develop the skills** they need to manage and take control of their condition, increase their activity and improve their quality of life.

### Benefits of exercise for chronic pain



**Flexibility**  
Maintain flexibility and movement



**Strength**  
Helps to build and keep muscle tone



**Cardiovascular**  
Important for cardiovascular health



**Mood**  
Improves mood and general wellbeing

Exercise therapy is included in all guidelines for the treatment of chronic pain - ask your physical therapist, the exercise expert



**Movement for Health**  
World Physical Therapy Day



**World Confederation for Physical Therapy**  
[www.wcpt.org](http://www.wcpt.org)

If you are an individual physical therapist or planning an activity with your colleagues at your workplace, remember to contact the WCPT member organisation in your country so that you link up with any activities that they may be planning.

A full list of WCPT member organisations may be viewed at: [www.wcpt.org/members](http://www.wcpt.org/members).

The materials produced promote the idea of a global physical therapy community. The day will be widely publicised on social media, using the #worldptday hashtag.

WCPT would like to thank Felipe Reiss, Jo Nijs, Lisa Carlesso and Peter O'Sullivan and for their invaluable assistance in the production of the toolkit materials.

# Ideas on how to take part

Whether you work for a national association, in a hospital department, a small clinical setting or are still studying physical therapy, you can find ways to mark the day.

Here are some suggestions to help you make sure that you choose something that's right for you, and that fits in with what you want to achieve for the day. The ideas focus particularly on the theme *Movement for Health* establishing physical therapists as physical activity experts.

## Public events

- A free exercise demonstration session in a public place – showing, for example, the difference between moderate and vigorous activity.
- A free health screening programme in a public place – measuring, for example, weight, BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, lung capacity. Shopping centres are an ideal place.
- Talks and seminars in workplaces, suggesting exercises to integrate into daily life and providing literature to employers.
- Talks or events at community centres.
- Public workshops on managing chronic pain.
- A roaming information booth, visiting different locations in the day, or over a week.
- A “health challenge” for the public, politicians or celebrities – for example, challenge them to walk a certain number of steps during the day. You could lend out pedometers for the challenge, or give them away free.
- A fun run.
- Public exercise classes, say in a large city park.

## Events for people of all ages

- Arrange a talk at community events to highlight the value of physical activity for chronic pain and how it can help people manage their condition, increase their activity and improve their quality of life.
- Arrange exercise classes aimed particularly at people of different age groups.
- Work with care givers or people in the community caring for those with chronic pain to assess ways physical therapy can improve their quality of life.

## In clinical settings

- Set up an information booth or exhibition in a reception area with information about what physical therapists do.
- Put up WCPT's infographics and posters on your walls and hand out our ready-to-print flyers and postcards.

## Added extras

- See if there's a local celebrity who can support your cause, and participate in any events. This is likely to increase public and media interest.
- Offer to be a guest on a local radio show, or to answer questions online.
- Have something to give people which will help them stay healthy, and show what physical therapists do to help: flyers, information sheets and stickers like those available from the WCPT website are a good place to start.

## Get inspired!

See what celebrations and events have been organised in the past.

[www.wcpt.org/wptday-history](http://www.wcpt.org/wptday-history)