Is Back Pain Psychological? What Your Back Pain Is Telling You

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Understanding the Psychology of Back Pain

While back pain can have a powerful and negative influence on one's sense of well-being, research has revealed that there is much more to back pain than most suppose. So, is back pain psychological?

Even though there are a variety of potential physical reasons for back pain, it is becoming apparent that a very large portion of back pain is psychological. While very few want to believe that their pain is simply psychosomatic, it is necessary to understand how pain is perceived, and amplified or reduced, by the brain.

By understanding the complex dynamics of brain and body in pain perception, one can have a complete view of the causes and potential treatment of back pain.

Can Back Pain Be Psychological?

To perceive pain, the mind and body work as one unit by relaying signals to each other.

When one stubs their toe, touches a hot object or experiences any form of pain, their nerves immediately signal the brain to protect them from this potentially damaging situation.

However, the opposite could be said of this process as well, because it is the brain that also regulates the sensitivity of the nervous system to pain. Because the brain is responsible for increasing or decreasing sensitivity to pain, it plays a huge role in the perception of pain, especially in cases of long-term pain.

Because the brain plays such a significant role in the modulation of pain perception, a large portion of chronic back pain is psychological. The brain has the power to make the most terrible wounds easy to deal with; however, the opposite is also true.

It has frequently been documented that some experience constant pain even after the condition that caused it has been resolved. This continuous recognition and focus on pain can drastically increase the perceived pain.

By understanding this, one holds the key to reducing the impact of chronic back pain.

Reducing Back Pain through Psychological Techniques

Because the mind heavily modulates the perception of pain, it is essential to ensure that focus is kept away from the sensation of pain. This is the primary means of subconsciously conferring that pain is important.

By paying attention and fretting over pain, the perception of the pain becomes much more amplified and can become unbearable. The best way to combat this is to always keep your mind busy and free from the non-stop perception of pain.

Stress and Back Pain

Studies have shown that stress levels can also have a huge impact on the perception of pain. Stress heavily activates the sympathetic nervous system and has been shown to increase the perception of pain.

The path to remedy stress-related back pain in each individual is unique; however, some common means to reduce stress are meditation, deep breathing, and awareness. Over time, reducing stress can have a dramatic impact on the levels of pain experienced.

Even simply being in a "good mood" can have a profound impact on the levels of pain experienced. So if the pain becomes bothersome, perform an activity you enjoy. This can be a very quick and effective means of pain management.

The psychological elements of back pain are, at this point, hardly understood; however, it has become apparent that the mind has a fundamental impact on the perception of pain.

By understanding that pain is not simply something external affecting you, but is a part of your state of being, one has the power to reduce this pain through mental technique and dedication.