



BACK TO WELLNESS: EMBRACING ALTERNATIVE BACK PAIN SOLUTIONS

Exploring Back Pain Relief Through a Different Lens



Your 2024 Open Enrollment Mailing is On Its Way!

The 2024 Open Enrollment mailing will start arriving in mailboxes shortly! Be on the lookout!

While you eagerly await the arrival of your mailing, visit the [Cook County Employee Benefits](#) page. Explore your benefit options, dive into the plans you're currently enrolled in and empower yourself with knowledge to ensure, your Choice Matters.

Open Enrollment takes place **October 16-31, 2023.**

Do you feel like you have exhausted all the conventional options for lower back pain relief? Fear not, there are additional approaches to consider that may help alleviate that nagging discomfort. From exercise to, mindfulness practices to self-massages, these options exist – all aimed at supporting your journey toward a pain-free life!

Exercise: Moving Towards Relief

A sedentary lifestyle might contribute to lower back pain. Incorporating targeted exercises can strengthen the muscles, providing better support to the spine. Even forming the habit of stretching for a few minutes each day is beneficial on your pain-free journey. Let's **'Stretch it Out to Ease Joint Pain'** with this BCBSIL health sheet. For those in a seated position most of the day, try to get up and move around for a few minutes every 30 minutes. This helps prevent stiffness and improves circulation.

Multidisciplinary Rehabilitation: A Comprehensive Approach

This strategy blends physical therapy, occupational therapy and psychological support. It is not just about treating the pain, it is about understanding and addressing its root cause. Individualized plans can include ergonomic assessments, stress management techniques and guided exercise.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): Mind Over Matter

CBT is a psychological approach that emphasizes identifying and challenging negative thought patterns. In the context of chronic pain, it helps you develop coping strategies, fostering a more positive relationship with your pain and potentially diminishing its impact. Consistent patients found the greatest results. Speak to your healthcare provider to determine if this is the right option for you.

Continued

Mindfulness Practices: Presence in the Pain

Mindfulness involves staying present and fully engaging with the here and now. It can help you become more aware of your body and the sensations of pain, without letting them define your experience. Techniques like meditation or deep breathing can be learned independently. Are you **'Ready to Give Meditation a Try?'**

Self-Massage: Relaxation and Release

Therapeutic massage targets muscles and connective tissues, helping to improve circulation and decrease tension. There are benefits to learning self-massage techniques, such as a cost-effective way to manage pain and aid in relief. Take a moment to review the article **'How to Relieve Stress and Pain with Self-Massage Techniques.'**

Mind-Body Practices: The Healing Connection

Yoga, Tai Chi and other mind-body practices emphasize the holistic connection between physical health and mental well-being. With trained instructors, these techniques can offer new ways to understand and manage your pain, promote balance and comfort. Mobile apps are also available for practices on the go for those with smart phones.

Moving Forward with Confidence

Exploring these diverse strategies provides fresh hope for relief, guided by professional expertise and personalized to your unique situation. Your body is a complex and incredible machine if you think about all the systems that work together to keep you healthy and pain-free. It might take some time and experimentation to discover the best route to relief, but these next steps in treatment offer promising paths. It is not just about the pain, it is also about enhancing your quality of life, tapping into resilience and reclaiming joy in everyday activities.

Stay patient with yourself, and always reach out to your PCP before implementing alternative treatments. If you do not have a PCP, you may call the BCBSIL Health Advocate number on your BCBSIL member ID card or log on to Blue Access for MembersSM (BAMSM) bcbsil.com and use the Provider Finder. This fast, easy-to-use tool improves members' experience when searching for in-network health care providers. The solution could be just around the corner, waiting for you to take the next step!

