

## Chronic Pain: Treatments Beyond Opioids



Opioids are the most common forms of [pain management](#). In the short term, they may not necessarily do harm, but for long-term use they pose a very real risk of developing an addiction. Fortunately, there are many choices among alternative treatments that can help you avoid an opioid addiction. If you have chronic pain and want to forgo the addictive pharmaceuticals, here are a few alternative options.

### Diet Makes a Difference

Your dietary habits have a direct impact on the way you feel, whether you suffer from chronic pain or not. However, for those who are living with chronic pain, there are certain foods to avoid as well as certain foods to add into your diet.

Inflammation is one of the most common causes of chronic pain. Therefore, foods that cause or [exacerbate inflammation](#) should be avoided at all costs. There are also foods that can work to [reduce inflammation](#). Simply by reworking your diet, you may be able to get your chronic pain under control. Incorporate these foods into your meals as often as possible:

- whole grains
- nuts
- peppers
- olive oil
- onions
- tomatoes

Conversely, [avoid](#) these foods and those containing:

- artificial sweeteners, including aspartame
- red meat
- eggs

- fried food
- processed foods
- trans fats

### **Herbal Remedies are Safe and Natural**

Herbs have been used to treat a variety of illnesses and maladies for centuries. In modern times, you don't need to have an herb garden to treat your pain. [Pain-relieving](#) herbs are available in the form of capsules, teas, drops, and essential oils. Be sure to do your research, avoiding any herbs that could interfere with other medications and ensuring you do not purchase homeopathic remedies.

Homeopathy is an approach often thought of as an herbal remedy but is actually a heavily diluted substance that, in larger quantities, would cause the ailment it is intended to be curing. The commercial produce is unlikely to contain even a molecule of the "remedy" herb.

### **Yoga is the Best Exercise for Chronic Pain**

Exercise is always a good way to fight chronic pain, however going for a run can be very difficult when you're in pain. [Yoga](#) is a gentle, relaxing, and low-impact activity that can be tailored to particularly bad pain days. The stretching is a wonderful way to fight the inflammation that causes chronic pain while endorphins released by exercise can also work to dull pain.

### **Meditation Proves the Power of Mind Over Matter**

Meditation is beneficial for a number of ailments including stress, depression, anxiety, and even chronic pain. The daily period of relaxation is good for muscle tension while the mental tranquility takes the mind off the pain. Buddhist monks have been known to do many more extraordinary things while meditating such as [raise body temperature](#) or withstand tremendous pain. A few hours of practice a week is sure to have a very positive effect on your chronic pain.

Living with chronic pain is not easy. Living with both chronic pain and addiction is even less so. Though opioids are the most commonly prescribed pain management, they are also very highly addictive. While many alternative treatments may not be as fast-acting or potent, they are not addictive.

Yoga, meditation, herbs, and a change in your diet are all positive ways to cope with pain as well as improve your overall wellbeing. One cannot meditate too much or eat too well whereas too much of an opioid can cause not only addiction but death. If you want to manage your pain risk-free, you may want to consider alternative treatments.

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