

As you consider and prepare to come to the MiPAIN Program at the Pediatric Rehabilitation Center, we want to share several things with you. First, welcome and thank you for considering this program to serve your child's needs. Second, you've likely been on a long journey: seeing many doctors, going through multiple diagnostic tests, facing unanswered questions, enduring unwanted changes to school and work routines, and even family strife. You are not alone. You are coming to a place where we bring both expertise and compassion to help you and your child find ways to cope with, and recover from, painful illness and fatigue.

## **What can I expect in the MiPAIN program?**

In our work with parents of children and adolescents with pain, we've learned several things.

First, pain is very difficult for children and teens to deal with, taking its toll on many areas of their life. Families share with us that:

- School attendance and achievement has slowed
- Sleep is difficult
- Physical activity has nearly stopped
- Parents have changed their work schedule, even sometimes stopping work altogether

We have designed this program to help you and your child reverse this trend and return to a healthy lifestyle. Improving functioning takes time, energy, and patience, which are sometimes difficult to find when struggling with a chronic, painful or fatiguing condition. However, with a collaborative relationship between your doctors, therapists, and psychologist, our program offers ways to help you recover a healthy lifestyle.

Second, seeing your child in pain is stressful. The heartbreak is extremely difficult at times. Some families very actively seek treatments designed to take away all of the child's pain and fatigue. Searching for a diagnosis that leads to an instant cure is natural, but searching delays skills that encourage independent living and recovery of your function.

We know that getting children and adolescents with pain to start moving again and actively living their life despite their pain, is what works. Accomplishing a healthy lifestyle, independence, and increasing one's quality of life takes:

- Effort
- Motivation for change
- Openness to doing new activities
- Working with a treatment team that can help guide you along the way



We work best with individuals and families that have already decided that moving forward and taking active steps to cope and deal with the pain is the right strategy. Families still uncertain about the cause of the pain, or who are actively searching for diagnostic answers, may be confused about why we:

- Have their child see a psychologist
- Focus on teaching stress management
- Ask their child to move despite pain



We do this to help you develop coping strategies, leading to recovery and getting your life back.

## **How does the program help my recovery?**

We frequently hear from people that they have tried medications and therapy in the past, but nothing helps their pain. When they have this experience, it is often because the previous strategies for pain management were either not targeted at the cause of their pain or the treatment approach was incomplete. For example, maybe you have had knee and ankle pain for years. You've tried Tylenol, ice, heat, none of which have helped. You have gone to physical therapy multiple times and that seemed to make it worse. This is likely because your treatment was aimed at improving strength and your body mechanics to reduce inflammation and pain. People with a hypersensitive nervous system do not get relief from these efforts because they are targeting a muscle or bony problem, not a nervous system (brain) condition. A portion of your pain can be addressed with these treatments, but it is likely not the "whole picture."

A multidisciplinary treatment approach is key for addressing chronic, persistent, or increased pain.

There are 4 key treatment pillars that must be present for success:

- Cardiovascular exercise
- Coping skills
- Pain education
- Sleep hygiene (a good routine for quality sleep)

If any are missing from your treatment plan or have not been successfully addressed in your life, the chances of success are greatly reduced. In the MiPAIN Program, your treatment approach is aimed at improving each of these areas.

## **What is the MiPAIN Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)?**

MiPAIN's virtual intensive outpatient model is a 4-week program that runs Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

You participate in:

- Virtual psychotherapy
- In-person and virtual physical therapy
- In-person therapeutic recreation
- Virtual art therapy

The format is a partial group model where you participate in therapy sessions with a group of peers experiencing similar conditions, as well as individually. Before you commit to a start date, please review your schedule to ensure that you can attend all sessions for 3 weeks in a row. You may have to start later based on your availability. Please recognize that parent/caregiver involvement is essential to program success and there are 2-3 sessions each week in which a caregiver is expected to attend (outlined on the schedule).

## **What is Psychology?**

In our program, you will learn that the psychologist's involvement in your child's recovery is important. Psychology helps increase motivation for change, learn skills to deal with stress, and recognize anxiety or sadness. This work is tightly coordinated with the work that happens in other therapies and the work done with other members of the treatment team.

Specifically, each person visiting the MiPAIN Program for the first time should expect to discuss:

- The nature of their pain
- The role that stress plays in their pain experience
- Treatment options for recovering their life

The treatment for each person is personalized, but it will likely include group or individual therapy (sometimes both) to help teach psychological coping strategies to deal with pain. The psychology team uses a program called CHIRP

(Children's Health and Illness Recovery Program) which is effective in helping people get their lives back when they have pain.

## **What is Physical Therapy?**

The main goal of physical therapy in the MiPAIN program is to optimize **functional independence**. This means that when you experience a decline or change in function due to pain, we work to restore your independence. This may include:

- Increasing participation in sport and leisure activities
- Increasing school attendance
- Increasing independence with mobility and participation in activities of daily living

Physical therapy promotes physical activity throughout the pain experience which helps you return to functional independence.

In general, we recommend that your child maintain a minimum level of daily physical activity while participating in the program. This helps them adapt to the pain response and allows them more functional independence. In order to be effective, it is important that they participate in physical activity every day, even when pain is bad or muscles are sore. In the program, your physical therapist will work with you to provide activity recommendations that help you meet your goals.

Physical therapy group sessions will include both one-on-one individual exercises and therapist-led group activities. Physical therapy activities are targeted at painful areas and focus on working through the pain to achieve functional independence. Physical therapy in the MiPAIN program also teaches exercise strategies that can help your child cope with pain such as yoga, relaxation, and deep breathing. The goal is to improve your overall functioning

at home and in school, and help you participate in leisure and sport activities that may be limited due to pain.

Treatments will include:

- Cardiovascular exercise
- Strengthening
- Posture control
- Balance

We may also recommend therapeutic taping (tape applied over specific areas to provide joint and muscle support), orthotics (devices such as braces), or other adaptive tools to cope with your pain and optimize function.



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### **What is Occupational Therapy?**

The primary goal of occupational therapy in the MiPAIN program is to optimize your independence in activities such as:

- Bathing
- Dressing
- Grooming
- Toileting
- Managing finances
- Education
- Employment
- Preparing meals
- Sleep routines

Occupational therapists help design treatments that help with growth and independence in each of these areas. People with pain often experience a decline or change in their ability to perform these daily activities due to their

pain. We recommend that your child work together with the family to ensure that they complete their self-care tasks and general household chores as independently as possible.

During occupational therapy treatment sessions, your child may be asked to perform self-care or household tasks to problem-solve how to achieve independence in that area. Therapists may introduce a new adaptive tool or a technique to improve a skill to achieve greater independence.

Occupational therapy group sessions include activities targeted towards areas where functioning can be improved. They also focus on working through the pain to achieve functional independence.

Treatments include:

- Activities of daily living
- Strengthening
- Desensitization
- Cognitive training

## **What is Therapeutic Recreation?**

Recreational Therapy assists people in returning to leisure despite illness or injury. A Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist uses recreational activities to increase physical, cognitive, social, and emotional function and teaches people how to maintain or increase quality of life.

In therapeutic recreation you participate in group recreational activities both on-site at the clinic, and off-site in the Ann Arbor community. On-site, you participate in recreation with a focus on its physical, cognitive, social, and emotional benefits. We will also look at individual recreation goals and how to successfully return you to a healthy and happy leisure lifestyle. Off-site, you

use the skills you have learned in the community with the support of the therapeutic recreation staff.

Typical therapeutic recreation sessions in the MiPAIN program include, but are not limited to:

- Board games
- Card games
- Art projects
- Leisure awareness activities
- Going out into the community



Off-site trips include local parks, museums (Art Museum, Natural History Museum), the Humane Society of Huron Valley, botanical gardens, Wave Field, bowling alleys, arcades, and more.

### **What is Art Therapy?**

**Art therapy** is a mental health activity in which you, facilitated by the art therapist, use art media, the creative process, and the resulting artwork to:

- Explore your feelings
- Resolve emotional conflicts
- Foster self-awareness
- Manage behavior
- Develop social skills
- Improve acceptance of circumstances
- Reduce anxiety
- Increase self-esteem

Art therapy's role as part of the MiPAIN treatment team is to work with the whole person: the spirit, the mind and the body to promote improved communication with yourself and others. It also helps improve your outlook to

help you manage complex pain better. Art therapy opportunities are provided within group and individual sessions. Art therapy activities are determined on an individual's treatment needs.

The benefits and goals of art therapy include:

- Self-expression
- Emotional regulation
- Anxiety management
- Improved self-image
- Socialization

### **What else should I know about the program?**

- Please wear appropriate athletic attire and tennis shoes for therapy. You may also choose to bring a water bottle to PT.
- For virtual sessions, login to your portal and the zoom visit 10-15 minutes early so we can start on time.
- For virtual PT sessions, set-up your computer or phone in a room in your home with open space to complete your exercises.
- Only 1 day of absence from the program is allowed by our attendance policy.
- Once committed to the program, you will receive a welcome packet in the mail with your schedule and more specific instructions.

### **How can I contact the MiPAIN Program?**

MiPAIN Program

2205 Commonwealth Blvd.

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