

THIS ISSUE

*Controlling pain during
COVID-19 Pandemic*

Is it safe to use ibuprofen

*Why pain population is
susceptible to COVID-19*

DID YOU KNOW?

VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS

We are offering telehealth appointments to those individuals who may be at higher risk and are advised to stay at home.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

With the outbreak of COVID-19, we are experiencing an unprecedented time in healthcare. Medical professionals are being challenged to provide the best care to our patients in a very stressful environment. It is more critical than ever to build trust and maintain patient safety and adjust standards of practice to adhere to both state and national guidelines.

This edition of **PAIN NOW** provides insights to share context of pain and the COVID-19 pandemic. We wanted you to know **WE ARE HERE FOR YOU**. DOC has been serving the Dayton community for over 25 years and will continue to be a resource in pain management throughout this pandemic. Our goal is to support our primary care physicians and community. We want to assure you we are following best practices for the safety of our staff and patients.

Sincerely,



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ABOUT DR. MEHTA

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CONTROLLING PAIN DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Pain prevention and control—particularly for chronic pain—has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though elective surgeries and outpatient procedures are allowed in Ohio again, many patients may be hesitant to get treated. It is key for patients to understand that not treating chronic pain may have negative consequences with the potential of increasing quantity, severity and complexity of the need.

Patients waiting for assessment often report severe levels of pain that interfere with their ability to function. People waiting over 6 months for assessment experience deteriorating health-related quality of life, increased pain, and increased depression.

It is critical that patients manage their pain before it evolves into an ER visit. Our staff will help you triage and provide next day appointments that need urgent medical attention regarding their pain management needs.



IS IT SAFE TO USE IBUPROFEN WITH COVID-19?

In mid March, the World Health Organization released a series of unclear statements about the safety of using ibuprofen in COVID-19 patients. First they said it may be unsafe but then they retracted their position with a complicated statement.

“WHO does not recommend against the use of ibuprofen,” in COVID-19 patients. They continued that “WHO is not aware of published clinical or population-based data on this topic.”

Even though they tried to clear their stance, it created a media frenzy and a lot of confusion for providers and patients.

It's important to note that **there is no scientific evidence connecting the use of NSAIDs such as ibuprofen with worsening COVID-19 symptoms.** Patients need to be educated that not treating pain with the necessary medications may lead to more issues.

WHY THE CHRONIC PAIN POPULATION MAY BE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO COVID-19

General Considerations in Chronic Pain Patients:

- Susceptibility of chronic pain patients could be higher as many are elderly with multiple comorbidities and potential immune suppression.
- Significant immune changes occur in a patient with COVID-19 disease.
- Chronic pain exerts complex effects on the immune system, including immunosuppression in some individuals.
- Chronic opioid therapy may cause immune suppression in some patients, and individual opioids differ in their potential.
- Use of steroids in interventional pain procedures may induce immune suppression. Intraarticular corticosteroid injections have been associated with higher influenza risk.
- Patients with COVID-19 who are receiving opioids can be more susceptible to respiratory depression, and the absorption of fentanyl during transdermal administration (fentanyl patch) may increase with fever.

DURING THESE CHALLENGING TIMES, DOC IS DOING OUR BEST TO PROVIDE SOLUTIONS.

What we are doing to ensure the safest environment in the office:

- **Daily health assessments:** Conducting daily assessments of our employees
- **Social Distancing:** Minimizing the number of patients in the waiting room by spacing out appointments
- **Sanitizing:** Following strict cleaning protocols ranging from sanitizing patient's rooms between appointments and cleaning common areas regularly.
- **Maintaining good hygiene:** We will ensure our staff follow best practices by washing hands between appointments and wearing masks.



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