
What is pain? **Exploring the Impact of Pain**

- Pain is defined by the [IASP](#) (International Association for the Study of Pain) as follows: "Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experienced associated with, or resembling that associated with, actual or potential tissue damage".

What types of pain are there?

- There are three categories of pain and a person can have more than one.
 - A. Nociceptive pain stems from actual or potential tissue damage.
 - B. Neuropathic pain comes from injury or disease of nerve tissue.
 - C. Nociplastic pain arises from altered pain signal processing despite no clear evidence of actual or potential tissue damage. The problem lies not in the “hardware” of the body, but in the “software” of the nervous system. Nociplastic pain is often misunderstood and can be difficult, but not impossible, to treat.

How does mental health affect pain?

- Mental health can significantly impact pain perception and management. Depression, anxiety, and excessive stress can make pain feel worse by increasing pain sensitivity and reducing pain tolerance. For example, people who are anxious and/or depressed may be more likely to focus on their pain and interpret it as more severe. Stress can also trigger the release of stress hormones which can increase inflammation and exacerbate (increase) pain.

How do hypermobility syndromes affect pain perception?

- People with hypermobility syndromes may experience significant amounts of pain due to frequent painful (nociceptive) input into the nervous system. Allodynia (something that is not normally painful becomes painful like sheets touching your feet) and hyperalgesia (something normally slightly painful is more painful than expected) can be signs of nociplastic pain.