

A Pilot Study Evaluating Mindfulness Meditation for the Management of Chronic Pain

Chronic pain is a challenging problem affecting 75 to 85 million people in the U.S. A variety of psychosocial factors make measuring and treating chronic pain a particularly difficult problem. However, there has been growing evidence to support the use and efficacy of mind-body therapies for chronic pain management. Mindfulness is a form of meditation that has been taught in several hospital-based chronic pain programs and may be a useful adjunctive therapy for chronic musculoskeletal pain. A recent study evaluated the feasibility of mindfulness for the management of chronic pain and to estimate its effects on mental health and mood. Thirty participants with chronic musculoskeletal pain completed pre-test measurements on mental health status. After twelve weeks of practicing mindfulness meditation on a daily basis, the mean change in mental health status for the group improved by 10.2 points. The study indicates mindfulness meditation may be effective and have a long lasting impact on mental health status and mood improvement for those with chronic pain.

This study was recently reported in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine