

PAIN REPROCESSING THERAPY

The Revolutionary New Treatment And How It Works



By **KIM JONES** in an interview with **DR. ARTI PANJWANI, DO, FAAPMR**, ELEVATE PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION, *Manhasset Living's*, INTEGRATIVE PAIN CARE SPECIALIST



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We sat down with our exclusive Integrative Pain Care Specialist, Dr. Arti Panjwani, who specializes in pain management from a whole-body approach for life-changing results. Dr. Panjwani has become one of the only medical providers in all of Long Island to offer a revolutionary pain management approach, Pain Reprocessing Therapy. Recently featured on *The Today Show*, this therapy has been groundbreaking in helping those suffering with chronic pain. Read on to learn more about this unparalleled treatment.

WHAT IS PAIN REPROCESSING THERAPY (PRT) AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Pain Reprocessing Therapy is an evidence-based approach, that aims to rewire neural pathways in the brain to relieve and reverse chronic pain. The fact is that all pain, regardless of the cause or the location, is processed in and generated by the brain. This means that our brains have a tremendous power to influence when, where, and how much pain we experience.

Let's take a simplistic look at how pain works: If we are injured, the sensory receptors in our body, called nociceptors, collect information that they send up the spinal cord to the brain. The brain then interprets these signals and if necessary, creates pain. When faced with an acute injury, this pain is protective.

Chronic pain (lasting longer than three months) however, is very different. It doesn't follow the rules of acute pain, involves completely different regions of the brain, and responds to different types of treatments. When pain transitions from acute to chronic, changes take place in the nervous system at multiple levels (in the body, spinal cord, and brain) and the brain actually reorganizes to reinforce pain. Research reveals that the brain plays a central role in the maintenance of chronic pain, which no longer requires the stimulus of an injury, and is cyclic in nature.

The reason that a lot of standard pain management techniques don't provide lasting relief is because they don't address how the brain has adapted to pain. This is what Pain Reprocessing Therapy targets. Through a brain-based approach, PRT aims to break the cycle of chronic pain by retraining the brain to "unlearn" the neural pathways that cause and perpetuate it. Through a system of psychological techniques, it teaches the brain to interpret and respond to signals from the body appropriately. You see, for all pain syndromes, the volume control for pain lives in the central nervous system made up of the spinal cord and brain. So, at the very least we can learn to regulate the pain volume and reduce pain. And in the best cases, we can reverse it.

A recent medical study¹ validated PRT as a very effective treatment for chronic pain. In the study, there were 100 chronic back pain patients. Half of them received PRT twice a week for four weeks, and half of them received treatment as usual. In the PRT group, 98% of patients improved and 66% of patients were pain-free or nearly pain-free at the end of treatment. These outcomes were largely maintained one year later.



HOW LONG DO YOU HAVE TO UTILIZE PRT TO SEE RESULTS?

The prescribed protocol is 2x/week for four weeks. For most patients, I begin to see positive results within the first few sessions.

IS IT SOMETHING THAT YOU MUST CONTINUE TO DO, OR IS IT EFFECTIVE AFTER THE INITIAL TREATMENT CYCLE?

It is effective after the initial treatment cycle and results in sustained pain relief for most. For some patients, I recommend a maintenance plan or a monthly check-in.

PATIENTS WITH DIAGNOSED ISSUES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM THIS INNOVATIVE TREATMENT AND HAVE FORGONE SURGERY, INCLUDING THOSE WITH LOSS OF CARTILAGE AND JOINT



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Our mission is to bring together diverse and innovative methods to heal pain, improve physical function and enhance well-being. We prioritize non-invasive, evidence-based, non-opioid therapies that promote the body's innate restorative mechanisms.

Conditions treated

- Back pain
- Neck Pain
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Happy Holidays!

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DAMAGE. DOES THIS CURE THEIR PROBLEM OR PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE?

From my professional experience, the outcomes of this treatment modality have been remarkable, even in those patients with known structural issues, like arthritis. Why? In chronic conditions, like osteoarthritis, the parts of the brain that send and receive signals get more sensitive over time. Scientists say that the more the brain processes pain, the more perceptive it gets, leading to a lower threshold for sensory stimuli.

Furthermore, because pain is constructed in the brain, it is essentially the result of your brain's interpretation of all the available information. Part of that information includes emotions, context, past experiences, conscious recognition of harm or danger, etc. In some cases, the brain can actually misinterpret signals from the body as dangerous, even in the absence of a true injury, resulting in the creation or amplification of pain.

Until recently, pain was thought of as a purely biomedical problem and so our emphasis on treating and fixing structural issues was top priority. We now know differently.

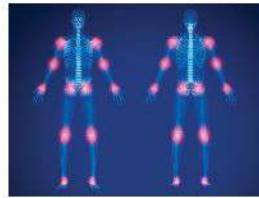
CAN PRT PREVENT CARTILAGE LOSS OR JOINT DAMAGE?

Not directly. However, once the vicious

cycle of chronic pain is interrupted and pain reduces, people become more physically active. This increase in activity—even as simple as walking—ultimately has a positive impact on joint health.

YOU ARE CURRENTLY ONE OF THE ONLY MEDICAL PROVIDERS ON LONG ISLAND TO UTILIZE THIS METHOD. WHEN DID YOU DECIDE TO INCORPORATE THIS INTO YOUR PRACTICE?

My practice prioritizes non-drug and non-invasive approaches that target the root cause of pain. I spent much of my career focused on the structural and functional aspects of pain. However, the more I treated patients, the more I realized that pain, especially chronic pain, is much more complex and wasn't adequately managed by the current model of pain care. My search for a more comprehensive solution led me to incorporate Lifestyle Medicine, Mind-Body Medicine and Pain Reprocessing Therapy in my practice. Based on my research and understanding of pain, I was using techniques similar to PRT since I started my private practice almost three years ago, but became officially certified earlier this year.



YOU HAVE WITNESSED THE SUCCESS OF PRT IN SEVERAL OF YOUR PATIENTS,

GIVING THEM BACK A WONDERFUL QUALITY OF LIFE. TELL US ABOUT A FEW OF THE SYNDROMES YOU TREAT?

I have used PRT successfully in a variety of chronic pain diagnoses, including cervical dystonia, fibromyalgia, pelvic pain, low back pain, neck pain, joint pain, CRPS, sciatica, and failed back syndrome.

HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHEN A PATIENT WILL BENEFIT FROM PRT VERSUS OTHER PAIN MANAGEMENT TREATMENTS?

I do a thorough physical examination, review imaging and other diagnostic tests and obtain a detailed history, which includes lifestyle behaviors such as a patient's diet, sleep habits, physical activity, stress levels and other relevant factors. It is through my assessment that I determine the underlying mechanisms and contributors of a patient's pain disorder and recommend treatment accordingly.

HOW CAN THOSE SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC PAIN DISCUSS PRT AS AN OPTION WITH YOU AND YOUR PRACTICE?

I offer a free 15-minute phone consultation to discuss details around my unique approach and to answer any relevant questions. If anyone is interested to learn more, please contact my office at 516-464-6049 or email info@elevatepmr.com.

1 A randomized controlled trial at the University of Colorado Boulder, published in JAMA Psychiatry

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