

## Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Acute Pain

Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Acute Pain (CBT-AP) is a biopsychosocial approach (Figure 1) to help address acute pain. Brief CBT-AP aims to decrease distress and disability from pain and assist in returning you to activities your primary care manager (PCM) approved.

### What are characteristics of acute pain?

- The pain usually has an identified cause. It is the body's response to injury
- Duration of less than three months
- Usually responds to treatment and diminishes with healing
- Sometimes persists and develops into chronic pain

### What factors can impact acute pain?

There are multiple factors that can impact the experience of acute pain. These include:

- Biological: pain, medical issues
- Psychological: emotions, attention, thoughts
- Social factors: relationships, jobs, hobbies

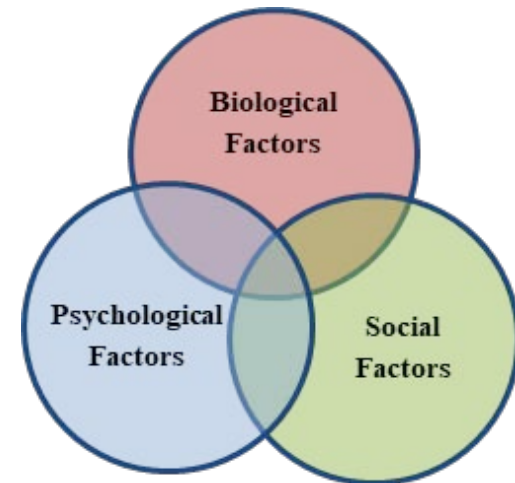
Brief CBT-AP will help increase factors that reduce the pain (e.g., get back into activities) and minimize the factors that make the pain worse (e.g., unhelpful thoughts).

### What can I expect from Brief CBT-AP?

1. Brief CBT-AP aims to reduce distress related to pain and help you return to PCM approved activities
2. Brief CBT-AP includes up to five 30-minute visits. Some patients will benefit from more or fewer appointments
3. A new pain management skill is covered at each appointment

*Key topics and skills include:*

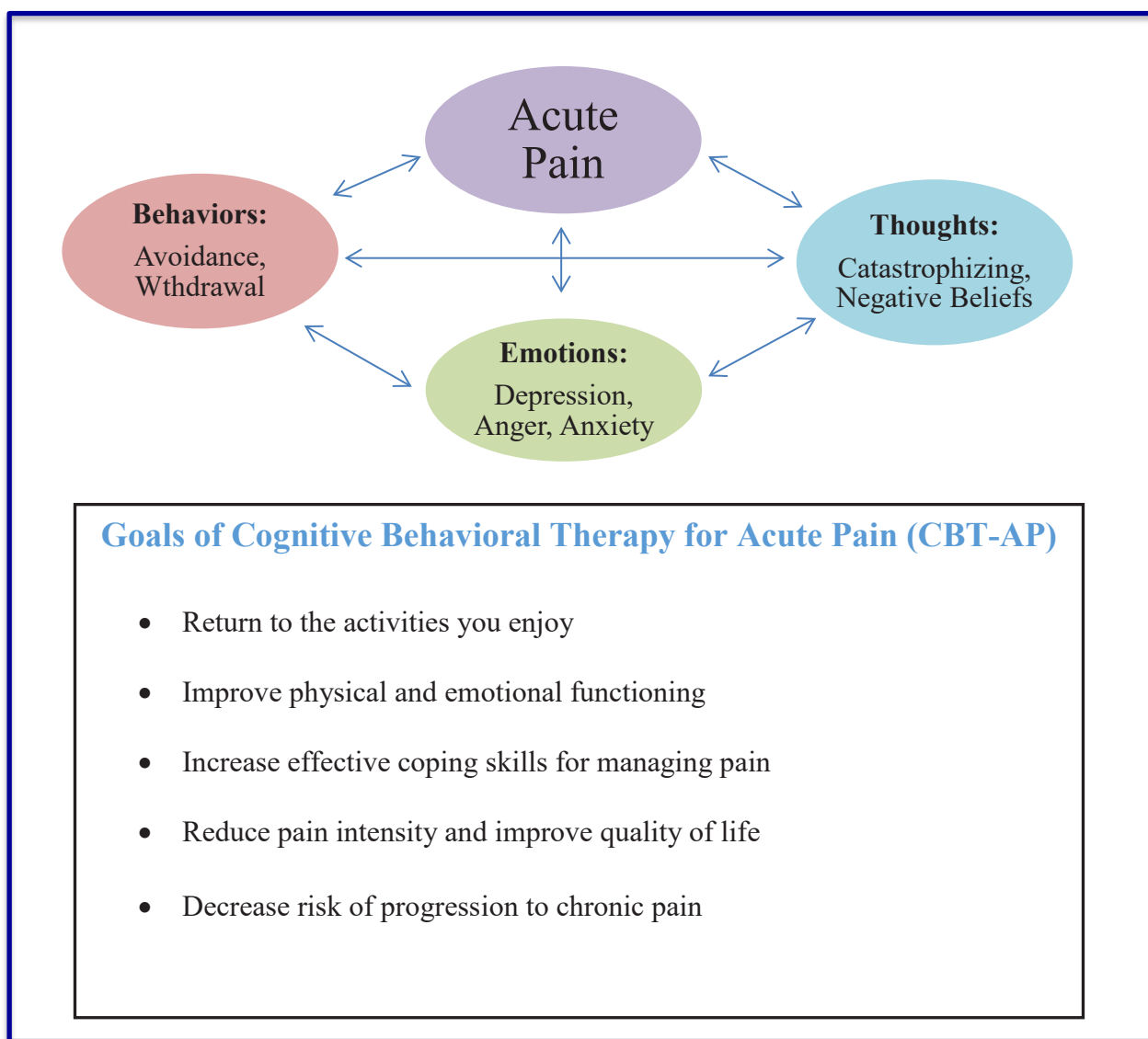
- Learning about acute pain, which provides information to help you manage the condition from a holistic perspective
- Activity planning, which helps with avoiding a common pitfall of underactivity because of fear of re-injury
- Relaxation training, which will help to reduce tension in your body and manage distress
- Cognitive coping, which will help with managing unhelpful thought patterns



**Biopsychosocial Factors Affecting Pain**

## Cognitive Behavioral Approach to Acute Pain

Experiencing acute pain involves more than the pain itself. Acute pain is best understood as an interaction between the physical components of pain, behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Acute Pain (CBT-AP) focuses on these biopsychosocial interactions between thoughts, behaviors, and feelings that impact your acute pain experience. As shown below, all of these pieces affect each other. The aim of this treatment is to help you develop adaptive coping skills so that you feel a greater sense of control over your life and the pain, help you get back into the activities you enjoy, and decrease risk for development of a chronic problem with pain.



# Activity Goal Setting for Acute Pain

Initially, a period of rest is typically recommended to treat acute pain. After this time period, your primary care manager (PCM) will advise resuming activities. There are benefits to engaging in physical activities for acute pain. Staying active helps with recovery from the injury and prevents deconditioning. Making a specific plan is helpful for resuming activities. Returning to or increasing engagement in activities may seem hard at first. You may be concerned about reinjuring yourself. These are common thoughts to have after experiencing acute pain. Returning to activities helps reduce these concerns.

Activity I want to resume: \_\_\_\_\_

*Tip:* Consider an activity you miss performing or a modified version of this activity if needed, consistent with recommendations from your PCM

My goal to increase this behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

*Tip:* Make your goal as specific as possible (e.g., when and where you will do it, how much of the activity). It will help you be successful.

The following chart will help you get started, remain active and “on track,” and remind you of the progress you make.

Date	Activity Goal	Significant Accomplishments

