

[IMAGE]

Chronic Pain Damages Your Brain

By Editorial Staff

Chronic pain is front and center these days now that the opioid crisis – the *wrong* way to manage pain – has been exposed and opportunities to prevent and treat pain instead of medication (a key example: chiropractic) jump into the spotlight. The reason for this increased emphasis isn't just because opioids have been proven often unnecessary and frequently dangerous, if not deadly, for treating pain – it's also because pain, particularly chronic pain, can be just as dangerous / deadly if not addressed. In fact, recent research suggests chronic pain may be so damaging as to cause brain changes that lead to cognitive decline and dementia.

In a study involving more than 10,000 elderly adults, researchers reviewed more than a decade of surveys that tracked pain levels and cognitive abilities. While cognitive function (memory, attention, etc.) tends to decline with age, those declines occurred significantly more rapidly in people who reported ongoing moderate to severe pain compared to people with little to no pain. What's more, the risk of suffering dementia (Alzheimer's is the most common cause) was also slightly higher in people with chronic pain.

brain - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark This is a great example of how pain can impact areas of your body and life that aren't directly tied in to the source of the pain. And that's where chiropractic care can be so important, because chiropractors look for the cause of the pain and then work to resolve it, rather than just treating the symptom with a dangerous opioid or other medication. If you're suffering from chronic pain, talk to your chiropractor; your body *and* mind will thank you for it.

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