



Seeing a Behavioral Health Provider

Why you were referred and what to expect

This handout explains the reasons for meeting with a behavioral health provider at the Center for Pain Relief. It covers what to expect at your visit and how our providers can help you manage your pain.

Why was I referred for a behavioral health visit?

At the Center for Pain Relief, you will see a team of health care professionals. This team will assess your pain problem and work with you to lessen your pain and improve your quality of life.

Seeing a behavioral health care provider is an important part of treating your pain. People who live with chronic pain often find that their pain has a negative impact on all aspects of their lives. Pain may make it hard to work, do other important activities, and get a good night's sleep. People with chronic pain often become depressed and anxious. These feelings can increase pain and make pain harder to treat.

Your pain-management doctor may ask you to have a complete health evaluation that includes a behavioral health assessment. Your insurance may require this assessment before it will agree to pay for some pain treatments.

Your behavioral health providers may recommend new treatments or changes in your treatments. Many medicines that help depression, anxiety, and sleep problems can also help reduce chronic pain. Also, behavioral therapy may help you learn new skills that help lessen your pain, depression, and anxiety, and improve your ability to sleep and do activities that are important to you.

If you agree that seeing a behavioral health provider could be helpful for you, we can start the process by contacting your insurance company and getting pre-approval, if needed, for you to see one of the psychiatrists or psychologists in the Center for Pain Relief. It is also a good idea for you to contact your insurance company to see if your insurance will cover this visit. If your insurance does not cover it, our patient financial counselors will offer you further help.

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What will happen at my first behavioral health visit?

Your first visit will be with either a psychiatrist or a clinical psychologist. This person will ask you about your pain, mood, sleep, activities, personal history, and treatment goals. This information will help the provider create treatment recommendations for you.

You and the behavioral health provider will talk about these recommendations at the end of your visit. The recommendations will also be shared with the doctor who referred you to the behavioral health provider and with other health providers involved in your care. You and the behavioral health provider will decide together whether your treatment in the Center for Pain Relief will include more visits with the behavioral health provider.

How can I get the most from my first visit?

- Please arrive 20 minutes before your appointment time.
- After you check in, you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire and to list your current medicines. After that, you will meet with the behavioral health provider.
- Your time slot is reserved just for you. Your visit must end 50 minutes after your scheduled start time so that your provider is on time for the next patient. If you arrive late, we may ask you to make another appointment to complete your health assessment.

Cancellations

- If you must cancel your appointment, please call and reschedule it as soon as possible.
- If you cancel with less than 24 hours notice or do not show up for your appointment, we may not be able to reschedule you.

Whom will I see as a part of my ongoing treatment?

If you have more behavioral health visits, you may work with these health care providers:

Psychiatrist or Clinical Psychologist

You may see a psychiatrist, a clinical psychologist, or both. Our psychiatrists specialize in managing medicines that can help depression, anxiety, sleep, and pain. Our psychologists specialize in helping you learn and use new skills to lessen your pain and improve your mood, sleep, and ability to do activities that are important to you. Both psychologists and psychiatrists can help you learn ways to manage your pain more effectively and improve your quality of life.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Phone help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 206-598-4282.

Nurse Care Coordinator

You may also meet with a nurse care coordinator. This person will help manage the care you receive and will help keep track of how you respond to medicine and other treatments. Your nurse care coordinator may also help you learn and use skills for self-managing your pain and problems related to your pain.

How long can I receive behavioral health services at the Center for Pain Relief?

The behavioral health services provided at the Center for Pain Relief are limited to the time you will be seen at the clinic. When you are no longer receiving care here, we can tell you how to find services in the community if you want to keep working with a behavioral health care provider.

If You Have Questions

We hope that this information is useful to you. We look forward to continuing to help you with your pain problem.

If you have any questions about your behavioral health visit, please call the clinic at 206-598-4282 and ask for the nurse care coordinator.

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