

Supplementary Materials: Reprinted with permission from Ben-Ami N, Chodick G, Mirovsky Y, Pincus T, Shapiro Y. Increasing recreational physical activity in patients with chronic low back pain: a pragmatic controlled clinical trial. *J Orthop Sports Phys Ther.* 2017;47:57-66. <https://doi.org/10.2519/jospt.2017.7057>. ©Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy®

<p><b>Standardised protocol:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two standard statements were delivered to all patients:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. It is easy to reduce pain. The problem is ensuring that it does not return.</li> <li>b. It is important that the body is strong and flexible. Both statements led to a discussion of the value of physical activity in preventing and managing LBP.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Physiotherapists were instructed to use their enhanced skills to build the therapeutic alliance, with an emphasis on communicating empathy and practicing active listening.</li> <li>3. The following information was delivered to all patients: Physical activity is the most powerful intervention for LBP, and is backed by international research, supported by the WHO. Any aerobic physical activity will do (no prescribed activity). As soon as pain starts, increasing levels of physical activity will help, and that once pain has subsided it is important to use the full range of movements, e.g. both flexion and extension.</li> <li>4. Postcard with exercises.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Individualised protocol:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Matching stages of change:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use of set criteria<sup>a</sup> to establish stage of change.</li> <li>b. Adapting the process of the intervention to match stage of change. Specifically:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contemplators: Focus on increasing awareness, pros and cons verbalised by patient, physiotherapist neutral.</li> <li>Preparation: (1) specific commitments to engage in physical activity (when, where, how); (2) communicating the commitment to others, and, (3) agreeing level of effort and coaching in healthy walking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. In the next consultation, for those who failed to carry out their commitment, use of a set of questions based on self-efficacy as specified by Miller &amp; Rollnick in Motivational Interviewing (MI)<sup>b</sup>. If responses score low, change routine to be extremely easy.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. For those who feared walking and said it increased their pain<sup>1</sup>, the physiotherapists used exposure through speed walking in the physiotherapy setting, down a corridor.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Classification into stages of change:</b></p> <p>Pre contemplation- patients explicitly expresses unwillingness or reluctance to engage in physical exercise.</p> <p>Contemplation- Patients expresses a willingness to discuss change but does not set a plan or a time to effect change in the immediate 6 months.</p> <p>Preparation- Patients express a plan to implement change within one month.</p> <p>Action- Patients reports that they have engaged in physical activity at least 3 times a week on a regular basis for less than 6 months.</p> <p>Maintenance- patients report that they have engaged in physical activity at least 3 times a week on a regular basis for longer than 6 months.</p> <p>Typical work in the contemplation stage involved discussions and evaluation of the proposed action, its effect on others, raised awareness of emotions, and contemplation of a changing self-image. Preparation involved making a commitment, planning for social support and substituting unhealthy conditioning.</p>
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a) Singer EA. The Transtheoretical model and primary care: “the times they are a changing”. *J Am Acad Nurse Pract* 2007; 19:4-11

b) Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People to Change Addictive Behavior. New York, NY: The Guilford Press; 1992

1) This component only applied to patients who chose walking as their activity, but failed to engage in it due to fear of pain. Physical therapists specifically asked about engagement and reasons for not engaging in the chosen activity.