



the FOUNDATION *for*
PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Optimizing Communication with your Provider
&
Beyond Drugs: Non-Pharmacological Management of Neuropathic Pain

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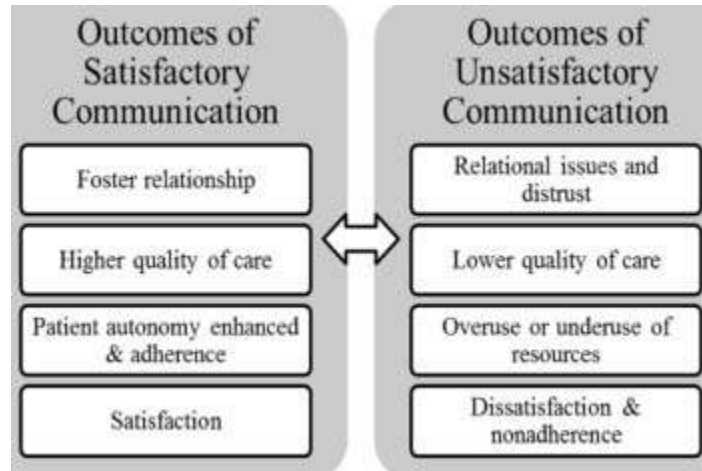
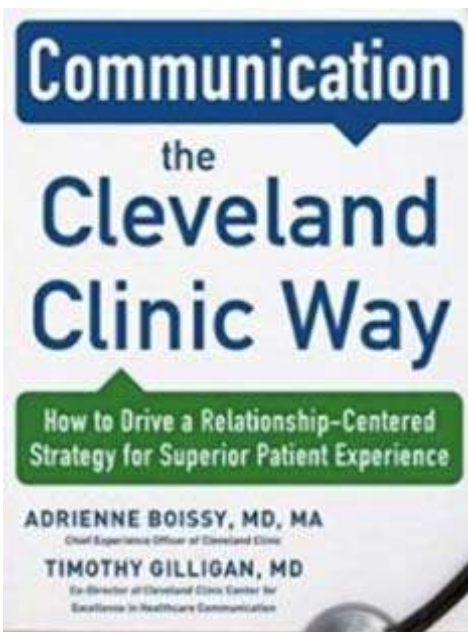
Part I



Optimizing Communication with Your Provider



Patient Experience & Communication



Listen > Learn > Lead*
The Path to Exceptional Patient Experiences



Patient Outcomes and Communication

- Research shows that effective communication between patients and providers improved health outcomes
 - ▣ Patients participate more actively in their care
 - ▣ Patients are more likely to stick with a treatment plan
 - ▣ Patients are better at managing their health
 - ▣ Other more specific examples:
 - Reduced pain (studies on post-procedural pain)

Sources:

[Acad Med. 2004 Jun;79\(6\):495-507.](#)

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[Br J Dermatol. 2001 Oct;145\(4\):617-23.](#)

[J Gen Intern Med. 2000 Jul;15\(7\):462-9.](#)

[Br J Cancer. 2003 Mar 10;88\(5\):658-65.](#)

[Hawaii J Med Public Health. 2013 Jun; 72\(6\): 180–184.](#)

	Four Habits Model	REDE Model	Relationship-centered Model
Origin	Kaiser Permanente	Cleveland Clinic	American Academy on Communication in Healthcare
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in the Beginning • Elicit the Patient's Perspectives • Demonstrate Empathy • Invest in the End 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship Establishment • Relationship Development • Relationship Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being Personally Present and Inviting Others to Do Likewise • Speaking Your Truth and Listening to Understand the Truths of Others • Valuing and Harnessing Difference and Diversity • Letting Go of Control and Trusting the Process

Talking with Patients –Using the Four Habits Model.
Kaiser Permanente. Madison Street Press, Oakland,
CA. 2011

Windover, Boissy, Rice, Gilligan, Velez,
Merlino (2014)

Suchman, Sluyter, Williamson (2011)

Extracting Communication Essences from Selected Validated Models

Human-to-human Connection:

- Courtesy, Respect, Rapport, Empathy

Patients' Engagement and Partnership

- Agenda setting, Treatment decisions, Empowerment

Recognizing the importance of a “good fit”

- weighing technical abilities or reputation with bedside manner
- knowing when it might be important to consider a switch
- doctors who have good communication skills often have patients with better treatment results.

From the Patient's Perspective...



- Lots of models for how physicians can improve communication with patients, but how can highly motivated patients make the most of communicating with their doctors/providers?
- In a complex medical environment, how can patients use electronic medical records, the internet and other technology to their advantage?

Before the Visit: “Homework”

- Write down key points about your history
 - ▣ Prioritize your concerns, set an agenda
 - ▣ Start with the most important things first
- Make a detailed list of all of the medications you take and how often you take them
- Write down questions you have for the doctor
- Take any X-rays, test results, medical records you have
- Technology tip:
 - ▣ see if their office has a way to submit/complete information in advance of the visit
 - ▣ Confirm if your doctor is part of a larger system, they might already have access to all of your records online

During the Visit: A Good Start



- Don't leave out the *personal*
 - ▣ Don't leave out what you might consider to be “irrelevant” personal information if it may potentially impact your health or care plan in any way! It matters!
 - Are you under stress
 - Are you having a challenging transition in your life
 - Is transportation an obstacle to going to PT, appointments?
 - Are financial or insurance issues causing you to shy away from treatment?

During the Visit: A Good Start



- Take notes, bring a family member or close friend
 - ▣ It can be hard to remember all the details and retain all information from a visit
- Ask questions that you brought in advance
- Don't be afraid to say what you're most afraid of!
Be honest!
- If you don't understand something stop and ask for an explanation

During the Visit: Wrapping Up

- Work collaboratively:
 - ▣ If your doctor recommends a treatment, share your worries about possible side effects or questions about other options
 - ▣ Don't be afraid to ask him or her to help you understand your options.



During the Visit: Wrapping Up



- Let your doctor know if you need more time or education about something
 - ▣ See if they can spend more time with you
 - ▣ Are there visual aids that might help?
 - ▣ Is there a nurse or somebody else who can spend more time with you?
 - ▣ Are there references they have you can take with you?

Transitioning at the End of the Visit

- Don't be afraid to ask for another appointment.
- What web-based resources or patient advocacy groups does your doctor recommend for you?
- What is the best way to reach your doctor between visits?
 - ▣ Be willing to communicate outside the exam room
- Is there another provider (nurse, etc.) who you might interact with between visits? Can you meet them in person?
- If tests are ordered, what is the best way to receive and ask questions about results?
- How can you access your records?

Part II: Beyond Drugs

Non-Pharmacological Management of Neuropathic Pain



Integrative Therapy use in Peripheral Neuropathy Patients

- 2004 survey of 180 outpatients with peripheral neuropathy:
 - ▣ 43% used complementary and alternative medicine, most frequently for pain control
 - 35% megavitamins
 - 30% magnets
 - 30% acupuncture
 - 22% herbal remedies
 - 21% chiropractic manipulation
 - ▣ 27% thought their neuropathy improved

Lifestyle: Nutrition and Exercise

- Nutrition and exercise for diabetic neuropathy
 - ▣ Maintaining close to normal glucose may reduce the incidence of diabetic neuropathy by up to 64%
 - Eating whole foods, low-fat, high-fiber, plant-based diet
 - Exercise: walking 30 minutes 3-7 days/week
- Yoga
 - ▣ A variety of trials have shown benefits including: improvements in diabetes, reduced BMI, reduced lipid concentrations, reduced BP, increased energy, improved well-being
 - ▣ One study showed some improvement in nerve conduction velocities after doing 30-40 minutes of daily yoga for 40 days in diabetic neuropathy patients

Lifestyle: Nutrition and Exercise

- Tai Chi:
 - ▣ Studies show that regular practice for months can improve walking, balance, strength, foot sensation, diabetic control and nerve conduction velocities
 - ▣ Tai Chi is also a safe form of exercise for patients with peripheral neuropathy



Mind-Body Therapy

- For patients with diabetic neuropathy **biofeedback** may help improve diabetes control (which benefits neuropathy), muscle tension and anxiety
- Importance of working with somebody familiar with teaching biofeedback techniques
 - ▣ Treatments may include guided imagery sessions or relaxation techniques
 - Patients wear a device that monitors and shows them their BP, pulse and other measurements to reinforce how emotion, pain and stress influences their body
 - Later patients have a computer system at home that they can use on their own

Bioenergetics: Infrared Therapy

- One randomized study used monochromatic near-infrared photo energy (MIRE) in three 40-minute sessions per week.
 - Anodyne Therapy System was used
 - Improvement in sensation, reduced pain and improved balance in diabetic neuropathy was seen, but not in patients with more advanced neuropathy.
- According to one study Photon stimulation (LED lights in near-infrared wavelengths) resulted in some improvements in patients with more advanced diabetic neuropathy

Bioenergetics: Bioelectromagnetics

- Magnetic fields can penetrate up to 20mm and appear to target pain receptors in the skin
- A randomized trial found that some patients with diabetic neuropathy who wore magnetic sole shoes for 4 months had significant reduction burning, numbness, tingling and pain. (“magsteps”)
- A double-blinded study of Frequency-modulated electromagnetic neural stimulation (FREMS) showed it was a safe treatment for diabetic neuropathy pain. Reduction in pain was transient (no benefit 3 months later) and



Bioenergetics: Acupuncture

- Acupuncture and electroacupuncture stimulate endorphins and help alleviate pain. Full physiologic mechanisms are not known.
 - ▣ A number of studies have shown improved pain, improved nerve conduction velocities
 - ▣ Some patients were able to reduce or stop their pain medications



Botanical Medicine

- ❑ Turmeric
- ❑ Geranium Oil
- ❑ Evening Primrose Oil
- ❑ Acetyl-L-carnitine
- ❑ Alpha-lipoic acid
- ❑ Vitamin B1
- ❑ Vitamin B12
- ❑ Fish Oil



Caveats



- ❑ Lack of standardization of these modalities & botanicals
- ❑ Small studies
- ❑ Potential toxicity
- ❑ Some procedure-based treatments are user dependent (vetting)
- ❑ Expense

Other references

- ❑ <https://familydoctor.org/tips-for-talking-to-your-doctor/>
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- ❑ The use of complementary and alternative medicines by patients with peripheral neuropathy.
- ❑ <https://www.consumerreports.org/exercise-fitness/tai-chi-benefits-your-heart/> Journal of the Neurological Sciences Volume 218, Issues 1-2, 15 March 2004, Pages 59-66
- ❑ Integrative Medicine, third edition. David Rakel MD, ed. Copyright 2012 Elsevier Philadelphia PA



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