



Dear Patient:

Welcome to Brazos Pain Management.

The goal of this practice is to maximize your quality of life through effective control of your painful condition. We accomplish this by first performing a comprehensive medical evaluation of your pain along with its contributory factors, including a thorough history and physical examination. We can then render an opinion as to what treatments may be effective for your condition.

Just as you as an individual are unique, so is your pain problem. We strive to help our patients set realistic and achievable goals to *manage* their pain but unfortunately, not all pain can be “cured.” Successful management of your pain requires *your* consistent input and cooperation including compliance with recommended treatments including positive changes in lifestyle, habits and routines.

The decision to offer specific treatments or prescribed medications will be made after a thorough evaluation. You as the patient have a right to expect a complete evaluation of your condition and a full explanation of available and indicated treatments. Recommended treatments often include procedures such as injections, physical therapy, holistic approaches such as biofeedback or counseling, and medications. While there are many indications for the therapeutic use of strong opioid medications, prescription opioid (or “narcotic”) therapy is not the primary goal of this practice, nor is it a given “right.” Opioid therapy is fraught with risks such as addiction, side- effects, and diversion – intentional or otherwise. Long-term opioid use has been shown to be associated with significant hormonal changes, inability to fight off infection, sexual side effects such as impotency, depression, and significant changes in cognition (thinking) and behavior. Recent negative media publicity and governmental regulations have prompted physicians to take a much harder line on these issues.

The chronic use of opioids in the treatment of pain is a controversial issue. While many medical societies have endorsed chronic opioid therapy as a valid treatment, there are numerous risks for the patient and the doctor. Should opioid therapy be right for you, it will be done on a trial basis first with careful assessment of your condition. If a clear benefit is seen, ongoing use of this medication may be indicated. In cases of ongoing opioid medication use it will be necessary for you to abide by an opioid agreement with our practice. This includes the close guarding of your medications, full disclosure of your medication usage to your primary doctor and pharmacy, psychological evaluation if deemed necessary, random drug testing if necessary, no early refills, and some other tenets. The progress of your therapy will be monitored closely and you will be required to attend all follow up appointments. If in our opinion, a questionable pattern of usage becomes evident, prescribing will be discontinued in favor of alternative treatments or prescriptions.

Cheryl White MD