



# In Motion

Highlighting Articles Advancing Pain Research in Canada and the World

## Featured article:

Csupak, B., Sommer, J. L., Jacobsohn, E., & El-Gabalawy, R. (2018). **A population-based examination of the co-occurrence and functional correlates of chronic pain and generalized anxiety disorder.** *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 56, 74-80. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2018.04.005>

## Key insights from the study:

- **Prevalence of Co-Occurrence:** The study found that generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is more common among individuals with chronic pain conditions like migraines, arthritis, and back pain compared to rates in the general population.
- **Increased Pain Severity:** People with both GAD and chronic pain conditions reported more severe pain than those with only a chronic pain condition alone.
- **Impact on Daily Life:** Co-occurrence of GAD and chronic pain was associated with greater disability, particularly for those with migraines.

## What happened?

Researchers used data from the 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey-Mental Health supplement, which included 25,113 participants. They specifically looked at individuals with chronic pain conditions such as migraines, arthritis, and back pain. The study examined how having both GAD and a chronic pain condition affected pain severity, disability, and work absenteeism compared to having a chronic pain condition without GAD.

## Why is it important?

This study provides important insights into how having both generalized anxiety disorder and chronic pain can lead to worse health outcomes. For example, people with both conditions experienced more severe pain and higher levels of disability. Understanding these risks can help healthcare providers better identify and support patients who are struggling with both anxiety and chronic pain. The findings emphasize the need for comprehensive treatment plans that address both mental health and chronic pain to improve patient outcomes.

## What now?

Healthcare providers should be alert to the presence of anxiety in patients with chronic pain and develop treatment plans that address both issues. This might involve integrating mental health support with pain management strategies. Future research should continue to explore how these conditions interact and develop targeted interventions to reduce the impact on patients' daily lives and functioning.

