An investigation into the role of activity pacing among patients with chronic pain/fatigue

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Background to activity pacing

- Activity pacing is frequently advised to help manage long-term conditions
- Anecdotal support for pacing
- Mixed empirical findings
- Guidelines cannot wholly recommend pacing (NICE, 2007)
- Newly developed multifaceted activity pacing questionnaire (APQ-26)
## Five APQ-26 themes of pacing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APQ-26 theme</th>
<th>Example of question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity adjustment</td>
<td>‘I broke tasks up into periods of activity and rest’</td>
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<td>Activity consistency</td>
<td>‘I kept to a consistent level of activity every day’</td>
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<td>Activity progression</td>
<td>‘I gradually increased how long I could spend on my activities’</td>
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<td>Activity planning</td>
<td>‘I set activity goals that were meaningful to me’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity acceptance</td>
<td>‘I changed my activity targets if they were unrealistic’</td>
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Aim

- Assess associations of APQ-26 themes with symptoms of pain, fatigue, depression, avoidance and physical function.

Methods

- Cross-sectional, questionnaire study
- Sample: 257 patients with chronic pain/fatigue
- Multiple regression of symptom scores with independent variables entered in blocks
  - 1:characteristics + 2:pain score + 3:pacing scores
Results

- Activity adjustment significantly associated with increased fatigue, depression and avoidance, but decreased function
- Activity consistency significantly associated with decreased pain, fatigue, depression and avoidance, but increased function

Conclusion

Future work will develop pacing guidelines that recommend pacing themes with empirical benefits
References


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