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# Pain Management Best Practices from Multispecialty Organizations during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Public Health Crises<sup>1</sup>

## New Practice Guidelines Article from American Academy of Pain Medicine now available

The current COVID-19 pandemic has strained medical resources, creating a dilemma for physicians charged with a responsibility to limit spread of the contagion, and their responsibility to treat the chronic pain patients they are entrusted to care for.

The American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) convened an expert panel that included pain management experts from the military, Veterans Health Administration, and academia to develop guidelines for pain management during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidelines provide a framework for pain practitioners and institutions to balance the goals of risk mitigation for health care providers, risk mitigation for patients, conservation of resources, and access to pain management services.

### Specific issues discussed include:

- General and interventional-specific risk mitigation
- Patient flow issues and staffing plans
- Telemedicine options and resource utilization
- Triage recommendations
- Strategies to reduce psychological sequelae in health care providers

### Some examples of the many important guidelines include:

- Pain management staff should take action to protect and preserve their health, resiliency, and endurance to be able to continue to provide safe and effective care to their patients
- In-person visits and procedures should be limited to urgent or emergent cases, and the meeting or procedure should ideally be conducted in a room designated for such purposes
- During evaluations and routine non-aerosolizing procedures, surgical masks are considered adequate and N95 masks are not needed

#### Reference

1. Cohen SP, Baber ZB, Buvanendran A, et al. Pain management best practices from multispecialty organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic and public health crises. [published online ahead of print April 7, 2020]. *Pain Med*. doi: 10.1093/pm/pnaa127

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