

A comprehensive overview and scope of interventional pain management

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Pain management is a complex field that combines science and empathy, one that presents a multifaceted challenge. It requires a deep understanding of various intervention strategies and constantly evolves as we uncover new methods to alleviate pain. From pharmaceuticals to interventional procedures, each modality offers a unique avenue towards relief, yet none are immune to limitations. Interventional procedures, such as nerve blocks, epidural injections, epiduroscopy, radiofrequency ablation, spinal cord stimulation, and more, offer a targeted approach to interrupt pain signaling pathways for chronic pain conditions [1]. Understanding the scopes and constraints of these intervention strategies is crucial for optimizing patient care and advancing the field of pain management.

While interventional pain management techniques provide minimally invasive alternatives to surgery, their utility may be limited by factors such as the underlying pathology, practitioner skill, and response variability. Moreover, the transient nature of some interventions necessitates ongoing monitoring and adjustment to maintain efficacy. However, surgical interventions are not without risks, including anesthesia-related complications, surgical site bleeding and infections, and the potential for iatrogenic injury [2]. Surgery also needs recovery periods, during which patients may experience pain

and functional limitations. Therefore, patients may be hesitant about surgery and would prefer non-surgical interventions if possible. In accordance with technical developments, new interventional modalities for pain management have emerged. Specifically, the epiduroscopy technique stands out as a distinctive method providing real-time visualization and targeted intervention to the sources of lower back pain directly [3]. Understanding the comparative merits and limitations of a new approach is vital for clinicians and patients alike in navigating the complexities of pain management. If only the needle and catheter are used, tissue damage can be minimized, and it is a technique for pain doctors to turn their attention towards.

Some people may view non-surgical pain management as a pathway to surgery, a simple check before confirming surgery, but that reflects a misunderstanding of pain mechanisms and treatment. Pain physicians specializing in interventional pain management play a crucial role in diagnosing and treating chronic pain conditions, sometimes in collaboration with other healthcare professionals. Their primary focus is on using minimally invasive techniques to alleviate pain and improve the quality of life for their patients. Non-surgical pain management can often be the final gateway to free patients from pain. To do so, pain doctors need to have the accurate understanding



and delicate skills of how to treat all pain. Integration into comprehensive pain management plans requires careful consideration of evidence-based practices and patient-centered care that prioritizes safety, efficacy, and holistic well-being. No intervention is without its limitations, and the pursuit of pain relief requires humility and prudence.

By tailoring treatment regimens based on the unique needs and preferences of each individual, clinicians can mitigate the limitations of any single modality and maximize the potential for success, thereby promoting innovation and advancing the field of pain management, as well as improving the quality of life for individuals living with pain.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analyzed for this paper.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Daehyun Jo is an editorial board member of the Korean Journal of Pain; however, he has not been involved in the peer reviewer selection, evaluation, or decision process of this article. No other potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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