

CBT as a tool to help people suffering from chronic illness.

Theory behind CBT

- Aaron T. Beck in the 1960's
- CBT works on the idea that what an individual thinks can influence how they feel and act, which further influences how they think.
- Based on the interconnectedness of the three factors.

CBT as an intervention.

- Addresses the psychosocial aspects of dealing with a chronic illness.
- Aims to help the individual with anxiety, emotional distress, psychological trauma etc.
- Works with the social side allowing for groups to be formed and for social learning.

Scott, A., Bisby, M., Heriseanu, A., Salameh, Y., Karin, E., Fogliati, R., Dudeney, J., Gandy, M., McLellan, L., Wootton, B., McDonald, S., Correa, A., Titov, N., & Dear, B. (2023). Cognitive behavioral therapies for depression and anxiety in people with chronic disease: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clinical psychology review*, 106, 102353. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2023.102353>.

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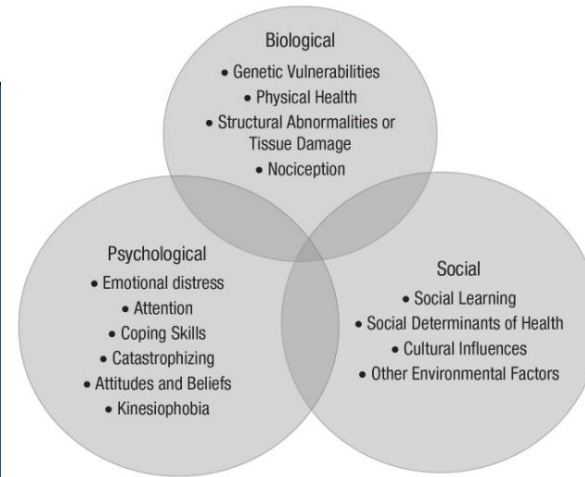


Fig. 1. Biopsychosocial model of chronic pain (based on the work of Engel, 1978).

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Knoerl, R., Smith, E., & Weisberg, J. (2016). Chronic Pain and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 38, 596 - 628. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193945915615869>.

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Strengths of CBT:

- Knoerl et al (2016) found that CBT reduced pain intensity in some form in 43% of trials.
- Eccleston et al (2015) found that CBT can be beneficial when including loved ones.
- Scholten et al (2013) Can be tailored to the individual via individual sessions or a sense of community or shared experience can be developed with group sessions.

Weaknesses of CBT:

- Tang (2017) found that chronic disease often comes with multiple psychological and physical symptoms, making it harder for CBT to address all needs without a hybrid or tailored approach.
- Scott et al (2023) found that when looked at on a larger scale, CBT is only moderately effective. CBT doesn't always help with the physical symptoms.
- Van Den Noort (2016) found that little long-term evidence exists, and further research is required.