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your tools to manage endometriosis and chronic pelvic pain

L

LEARN your **triggers** and how to manage them: Certain foods, sex (and different positions), bowel habits, sudden movements and **Keep a Journal**. **Journalling** can help you sense some control and often has many benefits on both mental and physical health . Understand the disease , find credible sources, learn about holistic management.

E

EXERCISE: walking, stretching, yoga and breathing exercises can help. That increases your **endorphins** specially if you can do your **exercise** in **NATURE**, that adds **Serotonin** too.

S

SLEEP Good **sleep hygiene** can help any chronic pain disorder. Avoid screen time before sleep, try to go to bed at the same time everyday, No coffee after midday.

S

SPEAK TO SOMEONE: Whether during your appointments with your doctor, pain team, physiotherapist etc, an extra call with your specialist nurse, a support group or even coffee with a friend

P

PRACTICE SELF-CARE - What suits you is different from what works with others. Explore. Options include **MEDITATION TO FREE YOUR MIND, MINDFULNESS, YOGA, PILATES** etc. This tackles the psychological impact of the chronic pain and the repeated stresses. There is lots of evidence on how this helps dial it down and improve your quality of life.

A

AVOID NEGATIVE THOUGHTS It might seem as though this pain will last forever, but often this is just a thought, rather than a fact. You know from experience that this pain has gone before, and it is very likely it will go again. **Take a deep breath.**

i

INCREASE healthy diet choices. **Learn what triggers you and try to decrease it.** While there is no enough evidence to recommend one diet over another. Many patients try **exclusion diet** like **gluten free diet, dairy free diet and soya free diet.**

N

NEUROPLASTICITY and brain training: learning new habits and activities can help stop the way we perceive pain. Pain is controlled and only let in by our Brains and not the diseased organ. The mind is trainable like a muscle and ever changing. You can rewire it with **MENTAL EXERCISE** to improve how you handle your pain. Examples include laughter yoga , MBSR, coupling stretching and breathing with your flare ups. This needs **CONSISTENCY AND TIME**. But it pays off. And maybe you can spare yourself lots of medications and unnecessary operations.

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Special thanks to K Christopher who had a look at the initial draft of my LESSPAIN side memoir and suggesting some of the components in the practice self-care section

