

Pain Fighter

Are you plagued with pain? A poll conducted in 2005 by ABC News, USA Today, and Stanford University Medical Center revealed that about half of Americans experience chronic or recurrent pain.

Almost every adult experiences some form of pain from time to time. Generally, chronic pain is defined as pain that lasts more than three months and recurrent pain comes and goes. Acute pain is pain that is short-term or injury related. The people in the survey categorized their pain as follows: acute – 44 per cent, recurrent – 34 per cent, and chronic – 19 per cent.

Of the people experiencing pain, almost half didn't know what caused it. When asked about the impact their pain had daily activities, 43 per cent indicated it affected their mood and 39 per cent indicated it hindered sleep.

The remedies people used to ease their pain varied greatly. Over half (63 per cent) indicated they had consulted a health professional about their pain. Of those, only 59 per cent felt they had received any significant pain reduction as a result of the visit. Another interesting aspect that came out was the methods people used for pain relief. Here's a list of the top relief methods:

- over-the-counter drugs – 84 %
- home remedies – 81 %
- prescription drugs – 60 %
- bed rest – 58 %
- prayer – 58 %
- chiropractic – 28 %
- massage – 28 %



For the people that used prescription drugs, 19 per cent indicated they took them every day. For over-the-counter drugs, 33 per cent used them daily or at least once a week.

In 1997, Dr. Norman J. Marcus, director of the New York Pain Treatment Program authored a report in which he stated that pain had reached epidemic proportions in America. In this report, *Science News Report* issued by the American Medical Association, Dr Marcus states, "ten of millions of Americans suffer from some form of pain each year, taking substantial toll on their productivity in the workplace and their ability to take care of their responsibilities at home."

Billions of dollars are spent each year on prescription and over-the-counter drugs. But drugs don't cure disease, they simply mask symptoms instead of addressing the underlying cause of the pain. When you

get a headache, it is not because you have an aspirin deficiency. Many of the drugs prescribed today have serious side effects. For example, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are typically used to relieve osteoarthritis pain, but they also tend to deteriorate joint tissue. Some drugs may have value for treating injuries and acute illness, but they are still biochemical outsiders to the body and tend to deplete nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals.

In non-injury cases, pain usually indicates that one or more of the body's systems are out of balance. Identifying the cause(s) for the imbalance and correcting it with proper nutrition (including natural supplements), exercise, rest, and lifestyle changes can provide a better long-term solution. One such supplement that can play an important role in helping bring the body back into balance is Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM).

Health Benefits

MSM is an organic compound containing 34 per cent sulfur. Sulfur occurs naturally in vegetables, fruits, grains, and milk. It is the third most abundant mineral in the human body. Concentrations are highest during infancy and decrease with age.



Sulfur is used in the production of proteins, including those needed for forming muscles, hair, and skin. It is found in teeth, bones, and collagen (which makes up connective tissues). MSM appears to be helpful for pain relief, inflammation, and supporting joint health. MSM also exhibits antioxidant properties. Research has shown MSM to have no side effects when taken as directed.

Dr. Stanley Jacob states in his book, "The Miracle of MSM", that based on clinical experience MSM has been shown to be an effective pain reliever in about 70 per cent of the cases.

MSM Capsules

MSM Capsules contains 500 mg of Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) and an enzyme activation system of Amylase and Lipase, in a vegetarian capsule. MSM is a natural form of dietary sulfur, which is critical to the human body. Although MSM is abundant in nature, it is easily destroyed by heat,



Supplement Facts Serving size 1 capsule		
	Amount per Serving	% Daily Value
Methyl Sulfonyl Methane (MSM)	500 mg	*
Lipase Enzyme	20 mg	*
Amylase Enzyme	20 mg	*
Vegetarian capsule.		
* Daily Value not established.		Capsule Size # 0

drying, and food processing. Hormones, enzymes, and antibodies all depend on it. The body utilizes and expends MSM on a daily basis and needs a consist supply for optimal nutrition and health.

Suggested Dosage: For usual adult dosage: take one to two capsules three times daily or as needed.

Scientific Studies

A randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial conducted in 2004, reported in *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*, examines the effectiveness of using MSM on patients with mild to moderate osteoarthritis of the knee. Subjects in this twelve-week study received either 3,000 mg. of MSM twice daily or a placebo. Pain and mobility measurements were evaluated using standard clinical efficacy scales. The MSM group had significant pain reduction and considerable improvements in their ability to perform daily tasks, compared to the placebo group. Researchers also observed significant reduction in factors associated with cardiovascular problems. During the study, no notable adverse side effects were observed.

In a 2002 issue of the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, the results of a trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of MSM were reported. For this study, fifty subjects with seasonal allergic rhinitis (inflammation of the nose) received 2600 mg of MSM daily for 30 days. By the seventh day, subjects experienced improvement in upper and lower respiratory symptoms and by the fourteenth day their energy levels increased significantly. At the end of the study, researchers found that allergy symptoms were reduced and energy levels were improved.

An unpublished, double blind study, documented in the book "MSM: The Definitive Guide", evaluated the effectiveness of MSM for degenerative arthritis. In this study, subjects were divided into two groups. The first group received a daily dose of 750 mg and the second group a placebo for six weeks. After the study, researchers observed an 80 per cent improvement in the MSM group. The improvement in the placebo group was 20 per cent.

The 2002 issue of *Alternative Medicine Review* reported on the results of a randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial to determine the effects of MSM on muscle strains and other athletic injuries. For this study, Dr. Ronald Lawrence divided twenty-four subjects with sustained acute muscle injuries into two groups. Each group received routine chiropractic manipulation, muscle stimulation, and ultrasound treatments. The first group received daily doses of MSM and the second group a placebo. Subjects continued on the treatment routine until all symptoms were resolved. Subjects in the MSM group experienced a 58.3 per cent reduction in symptoms and the placebo group a 33.3 per cent reduction. Dr. Lawrence noted that subjects in the MSM group recovered after 3.25 (on average) chiropractic treatments. Subjects in the placebo group needed 5.25 (on average) chiropractic treatments.

Anecdotal evidence appears to suggest that daily doses of 2000 mg of MSM may deter mosquitoes from biting humans.

References:

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- Kim LS, Axelrod LJ, Howard P, Buratovich N, Waters RF. "Efficacy of methylsulfonyl-methane (MSM) in osteoarthritis pain of the knee: a pilot clinical trial." *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage* (14, pg. 286-94): Southwest College Research Institute: Arizona; 2006.

Resources:

- Monograph. "Methylsulfonylmethane." *Alternative Medicine Review* (8, pg 438-441) Throne Research, Inc.: Massachusetts; 2003.

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The FDA has not evaluated these statements. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. PMC1108