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*Pain Management A Single-Session Pain Management Intervention:  
Introduction to Empowered Relief™<sup>2</sup>*

# A Single-Session Pain Management Intervention:

## Introduction to Empowered Relief

TM 

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# Outline

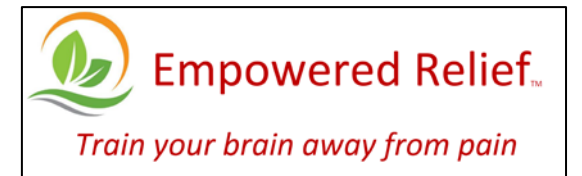
- Objectives
- Overview of Empowered Relief™<sup>?</sup>
- Components of Empowered Relief™<sup>?</sup>
- Single-session intervention
  - Evidence
  - Process and logistics
- Empowered Relief™<sup>?</sup> at Newton-Wellesley Hospital: An example of implementation
- Next steps
  - Locating workshops
  - Certification process for providers

# Objectives

1. Identify purpose of and rationale for Empowered Relief™, a single-session cognitive behavioral pain management intervention
2. Identify resources for connecting patients with Empowered Relief® workshop and seeking Empowered Relief™ certification for interested providers

# Overview of Empowered Relief™

- Single-session, evidence-based pain management workshop for patients developed by Beth Darnall, PhD and her colleagues at Stanford University
  - Two-hour workshop
  - Virtual or in-person
  - Multiple versions
  - Emphasizes biopsychosocial conceptualization of pain
  - Normalizing and increasing access to pain psychology
  - Providers across disciplines can deliver the workshop





- Insurance coverage
- Time
- Co-pays
- Travel
- Work / family obligations
- Pain / health
- Proximity (rural settings)
- No psychologists nearby who are trained to treat pain
- Patients are resistance to “psychological treatment” for pain

Darnall BD et al. *Pain Med* 2016

# Empowered Relief <sup>TM</sup> components

- Pain education
  - Sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system
  - Stress and pain responses
  - Psychology/emotion as part of pain
  - Pain and the brain
  - Pain mindset
  - Evidence for Empowered Relief <sup>TM</sup> and CBT
- Cognitive and behavioral skills
  - Relaxation
  - Binaural audio file
  - Cognitive reframing
  - Self-soothing skills
  - Patients complete personalized plan as part of workshop

# Single-session intervention:

## Evidence

Results for a 3-arm randomized controlled trial conducted in 263 adults with chronic low back pain revealed that in-person delivered Empowered Relief<sup>TM</sup> was **non-inferior** to 16 hours of CBT for reducing **pain catastrophizing, pain intensity, pain interference, and multiple secondary outcomes at 3-months post-treatment** (Darnall BD et. al., JAMA Network Open, 2021).





**Empowered Relief™** was similar to 8-session CBT for improving:

- Pain intensity
- Pain interference
- Pain catastrophizing

Secondary outcomes:

- Pain self-efficacy
- Pain bothersomeness
- Sleep disturbance
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Fatigue

Study Details:

- Chronic low back pain study (N=263)
- Half had 2+ chronic pain conditions
- ***Results at 3 months post-treatment***



Darnall BD et al. JAMA Network Open. 2021;4(8):e2113401.





**Original Investigation** | Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

# Comparison of a Single-Session Pain Management Skills Intervention With a Single-Session Health Education Intervention and 8 Sessions of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Adults With Chronic Low Back Pain A Randomized Clinical Trial

Beth D. Darnall, PhD; Anuradha Roy, MSc; Abby L. Chen, BS; Maisa S. Ziadni, PhD; Ryan T. Keane, MA; Dokyoung S. You, PhD; Kristen Slater, PsyD; Heather Poupore-King, PhD; Ian Mackey, BA; Ming-Chih Kao, PhD, MD; Karon F. Cook, PhD; Kate Lorig, DrPH; Dongxue Zhang, MS; Juliette Hong, MS, MEd; Lu Tian, PhD; Sean C. Mackey, MD, PhD

## Abstract

**IMPORTANCE** Chronic low back pain (CLBP), the most prevalent chronic pain condition, imparts substantial disability and discomfort. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) reduces the effect of CLBP, but access is limited.

**OBJECTIVE** To determine whether a single class in evidence-based pain management skills (empowered relief) is noninferior to 8-session CBT and superior to health education at 3 months after treatment for improving pain catastrophizing, pain intensity, pain interference, and other secondary outcomes.

## Key Points

**Question** Is a single-session pain relief class noninferior to 8 sessions of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) at 3 months after treatment?

**Findings** In this 3-arm randomized clinical trial that included 263 adults with chronic low back pain, a single-session pain management skills class

# Single-session intervention:

## Process & logistics

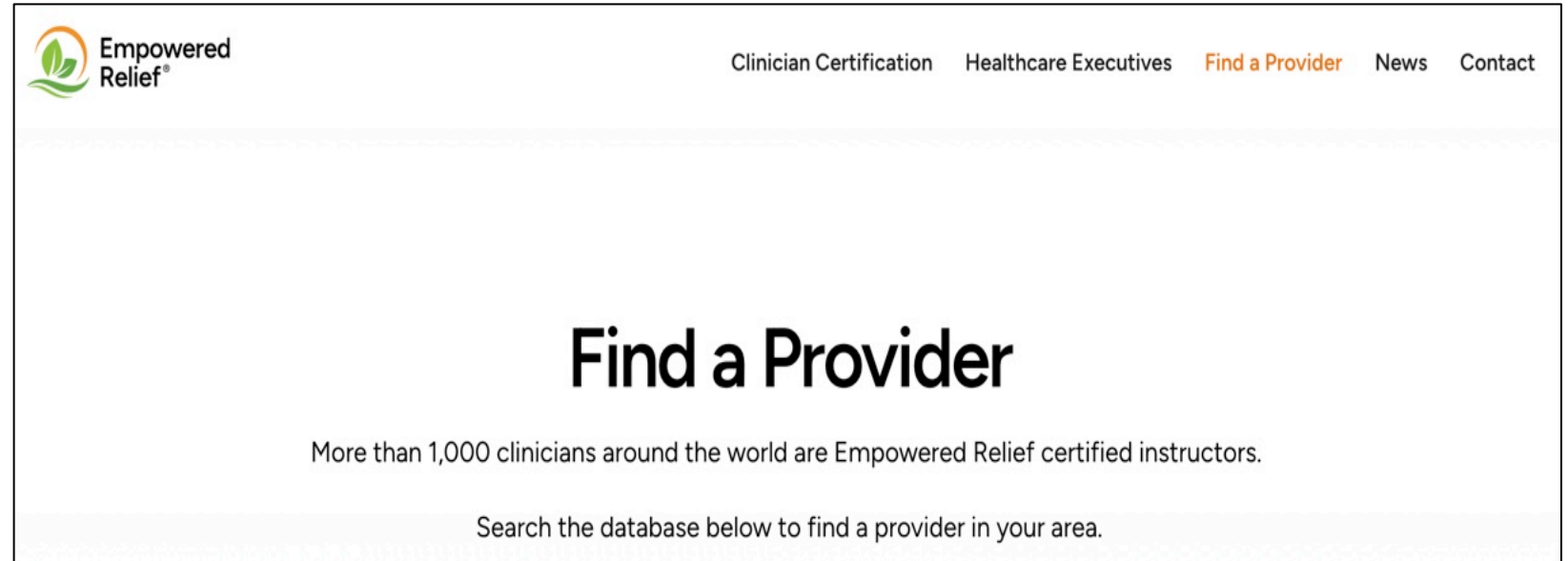
- Patients referred directly from providers across disciplines
- One-time, two-hour commitment
- Materials provided prior to or at the time of workshop
- Billing



# Empowered Relief <sup>TM</sup> at Newton-Wellesley Hospital

- Started in December 2023
  - Acute version for surgical patients
  - Referred by two spine surgeons at Newton-Wellesley Hospital
  - Based on implementation model from Cleveland Clinic (Davin et al., 2022)
- Expanded to patients experiencing chronic pain in May 2024
- Each workshop now offered once per month
- All workshops currently virtual
  - Materials provided electronically prior to the workshop
- Provider & staff time commitment

# Next Steps: Locating workshops



The screenshot shows the Empowered Relief website. In the top left corner is the logo, which consists of a stylized green leaf inside a circle, followed by the text "Empowered Relief®". In the top right corner, there is a navigation menu with the following items: "Clinician Certification", "Healthcare Executives", "Find a Provider" (highlighted in orange), "News", and "Contact". The main content area features the heading "Find a Provider" in a large, bold, black font. Below this heading, there is a paragraph of text: "More than 1,000 clinicians around the world are Empowered Relief certified instructors." At the bottom of the main content area, there is a light gray bar with the text: "Search the database below to find a provider in your area."

<https://empoweredrelief.com/>

Next steps: Training for providers

## Clinician Certification Workshops

Empowered Relief is a single-session, evidence-based pain management intervention.

Clinicians of any discipline may join our two-day workshop and become a certified Empowered Relief instructor.

Book below, or [learn more about our scholarships](#).

<https://empoweredrelief.com/>

# References

Darnall, B.D., Roy, A., Chen, A.L., Ziadni, M.S., Keane, R.T., You, D.S., Slater, K., Poupore-King, H., Mackey, I., Kao, M., Cook, K.F., Lorig, K., Zhang, D., Hong, J., Tian, L. & Mackey, S.C. (2021). Comparison of a single-session pain management skills intervention with a single-session health education intervention and 8 sessions of cognitive behavioral therapy in adults with chronic low back pain: a randomized clinical trial. *JAMA network open*, 4(8), e2113401-e2113401. [doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.13401](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.13401)

Davin, S. A., Savage, J., Thompson, N. R., Schuster, A., & Darnall, B. D. (2022). Transforming standard of care for spine surgery: integration of an online single-session behavioral pain management class for perioperative optimization. *Frontiers in Pain Research*, 3, 856252. [doi.org/10.3389/fpain.2022.856252](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpain.2022.856252)