



Data Points

CWHS

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Pain is a common problem that can interfere with daily life and impact relationships. Whether pain is acute (severe and lasts a short time) or chronic (recurs or persists over time and interferes with functioning), it can seem to take over large parts of a woman's life. Pain can create feelings of confusion, anger, guilt, and uncertainty. Feelings and suffering from the pain can affect both the woman in pain and others in her support system, including family, friends, and co-workers. A woman living with pain may find her social interaction and support diminish over time as much of her daily activities and personal relationships are controlled by her pain. There are a number of things that can assist in pain control and in managing pain, including medication, exercise, weight control, stretching, using correct posture, and decreasing anxiety. There are also support groups available for both pain sufferers and their family and friends.

The 1998 California Women's Health Survey asked women: **"During the last 12 months, has pain often kept you from doing things you wanted to do?"** Other questions asked about feeling overwhelmed by problems that were piled up so high they could not be overcome, num-

ber of days in the past month they felt anxious, caregiving, and perception of social support (did a woman have someone she could count on if she needed help with every-day activities, was in financial difficulty, was sick or injured and needed to stay in bed for a few days, or needed a ride to an appointment).

Of women who reported pain, 22% reported that pain limited their activities. Pain was more common among older women: 30% of women ages 55 and older, 24% of women ages 35-54, and 16% ages 18-34 reported pain. About 25% of Black, White, and Hispanic women reported pain, while 17% of Asian women reported pain.

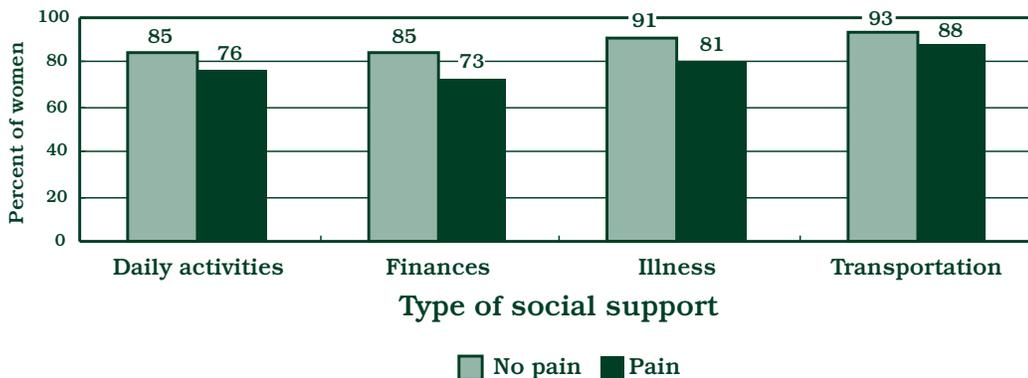
Compared to women who did not report pain, women in pain were more likely to feel overwhelmed (25% vs. 9%), have more anxiety (14 days vs. 9 days in the past month), and more often be caregivers (31% vs. 23%).

Over 80% of women who reported no pain had support with daily activities, finances, illness and transportation, and over 70% of women who reported pain had support in these same areas.

PAIN AND SOCIAL SUPPORT AMONG CALIFORNIA WOMEN, 1998

CMRI (California Medical Review, Inc.)

Types of Social Support Available To Women With and Without Pain, California, 1998



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