



## 5 Ways Hypnosis is an Effective Tool for Pain Management

Backed by Years of Clinical Research

### 1. Pain is real — and hypnosis changes how the brain interprets it

Pain isn't just a physical signal — it's a brain experience. The brain builds the sensation of pain from many inputs, including nerves, attention, emotions, and past experiences. **Hypnosis works by helping the brain shift how it processes those signals and reduce how intense those sensations feel.** This is supported by a large meta-analysis of clinical trials showing that participants receiving hypnosis reported medium reductions in pain compared to controls. In fact, **the average person in hypnosis reduced pain more than about 73% of people in control groups.**

### 2. Hypnosis lowers pain and stress simultaneously

Pain and stress feed each other — when we feel unsafe, the nervous system amplifies pain signals. **Hypnosis helps calm the nervous system and lower the brain's threat response, which in turn reduces the felt intensity of pain.** For example, in clinical settings hypnosis has been shown to significantly reduce pain and anxiety during medical procedures compared to standard care and also reduce the need for additional pain medication.

### 3. Hypnotic suggestions can have measurable pain-reducing effects

Across dozens of controlled experimental trials with healthy participants, hypnosis consistently produced analgesic effects — meaning hypnosis genuinely reduced pain ratings. The strongest effects occur when direct pain-reduction suggestions are used, showing up to 42% clinically meaningful decreases in pain among people who are moderately to highly responsive to hypnotic suggestions.



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#### 4. Hypnosis as part of a pain management plan has lasting benefits

In real clinical practice, hypnosis isn't just a one-off trick — it can be **a complementary tool that builds self-regulation skills**. Studies with structured hypnosis sessions for chronic pain show moderate improvements in pain intensity and how much pain interferes with daily life — especially when people do multiple sessions over time.

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#### 5. Hypnosis gives people control and choice

Finally, one of the most powerful aspects of hypnosis for pain is that it empowers the individual. Rather than relying solely on medications or external interventions, **hypnosis teaches skills like focus shifting, body awareness, and nervous system regulation**. This helps people feel less at the mercy of pain and more in control of their experience — which reduces suffering.

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So, to recap:

**Hypnosis doesn't erase pain by magic — it supports the brain and nervous system to reinterpret pain signals, reduce stress responses, and build real coping skills. There's solid evidence behind it, and it can be a valuable part of comprehensive pain management.**

## Research Citations from peer-reviewed journals and systematic reviews/meta-analyses:

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### 1) Comprehensive clinical pain meta-analysis

Jensen MP, et al. Hypnosis and the Alleviation of Clinical Pain: A Comprehensive Meta-Analysis. *Pain*. 2021;162(1):1-10. doi:10.1016/j.pain.2020.10.028 — A meta-analysis of 45 controlled trials showing that hypnosis produces medium effect sizes in reducing clinical pain compared with control conditions.

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### 2) Experimental pain meta-analysis (analgesic effects)

Thompson T, et al. The effectiveness of hypnosis for pain relief: A systematic review and meta-analysis of 85 controlled experimental trials. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*. 2019;99:298-310. — Found that hypnosis produced significant analgesic effects across experimental pain models, with meaningful clinical pain reductions using direct suggestions.

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### 3) Hypnosis for acute and procedural pain

Yerzhan A, Ayazbekova A, Lavage DR, Chelly JE. The Use of Medical Hypnosis to Prevent and Treat Acute and Chronic Pain: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *J Clin Med*. 2025;14(13):4661. — Shows a statistically significant reduction in acute pain scores and opioid use with hypnosis during medical procedures.

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### 4) Adjunctive hypnosis in clinical pain

Jones HG, Rizzo RRN, Pulling BW, et al. Adjunctive use of hypnosis for clinical pain: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Pain Reports*. 2024;9(5):e1185. — Synthesizes randomized controlled trials of hypnosis used alongside standard care, showing additional analgesic benefits for various pain conditions.

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### 5) Hypnosis for chronic musculoskeletal/neuropathic pain

Elkins G, et al. Hypnosis to manage musculoskeletal and neuropathic chronic pain: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *J Pain Res*. 2022;15:123-136. — Found moderate reductions in pain intensity and interference with long-term hypnosis protocols.

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