

AAPM Fact Sheet



Founded in 1983, the American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) is the premier scientific and educational association for pain physicians and their treatment teams. The AAPM has a membership of nearly 2,400 medical professionals.

The specialty of Pain Medicine is concerned with the study of pain, prevention of pain, and the evaluation, treatment, and rehabilitation of persons in pain. Some conditions may have pain and associated symptoms arising from a discrete cause, such as postoperative pain or pain associated with a malignancy, or may be conditions in which pain constitutes the primary problem, such as neuropathic pains or headaches. The evaluation of painful syndromes includes interpretation of historical data; review of previous laboratory, imaging, and electrodiagnostic studies; assessment of behavioral, social, occupational and avocational issues; and interview and examination of the patient by the pain specialist. It may require specialized diagnostic procedures, including central and peripheral neural blockade or monitored drug infusions. The special needs of the pediatric and geriatric populations, and patients' cultural contexts, are considered when formulating a comprehensive treatment plan.

The pain physician serves as a consultant to other physicians but is often the principal treating physician and may provide care at various levels, such as direct treatment, prescribing medication, prescribing rehabilitation services, performing pain relieving procedures, counseling patients and families, directing a multidisciplinary team, coordinating care with other health care providers and providing consultative services to public and private agencies pursuant to optimal health care delivery to the patient suffering from pain. The pain physician may work in a variety of settings and is competent to treat the entire range of pain encountered in the delivery of quality health care.

Active Physician Members – AAPM membership is open to physicians (i.e., doctors of medicine or doctors of osteopathy) who practice medicine in the United States or Canada and spend a significant portion of their professional activities within the field of pain medicine or related disciplines.

International Members – International members are physicians who have a license to practice medicine within their country of origin outside of the United States and Canada.

Resident Members – Resident members must be enrolled and in good standing in a residency program in an institution within the United States approved by the American Board of Pain Medicine, the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education, or the American Osteopathic Association.

Student Members – Student members must be enrolled and in good standing in an accredited graduate level program in the United States or Canada, leading to licensure, certification or registration in a clinical healthcare profession involved in direct care of patients with pain.

Trainee Members – AAPM provides graduated dues structure for members enrolled and in good standing in a fellowship program in an institution within the United States that are approved by the American Board of Pain Medicine, the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education or the American Osteopathic Association.

Affiliate Members – Affiliate members are non-physician professionals in the United States or Canada who provide direct patient care as part of a pain care team or whose principal professional responsibilities support the field of pain medicine. There are two categories of Affiliate membership: Clinical Practice Affiliates and Nonclinical Affiliates:

- Clinical Practice Affiliates must be or eligible to be licensed, registered, or certified in a clinical healthcare profession.
- Nonclinical Affiliates principal professional responsibilities must support the field of pain medicine, but does not include direct patient care.

AAPM Mission Statement

To optimize the health of patients in pain and eliminate the major public health problem of pain by advancing the practice and the specialty of pain medicine.

We are committed to:

- the highest standard of patient care
- scholarship, science, and research
- upholding ethical standards and professional integrity
- advancing public health

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