



ALIGN

PAIN MANAGEMENT



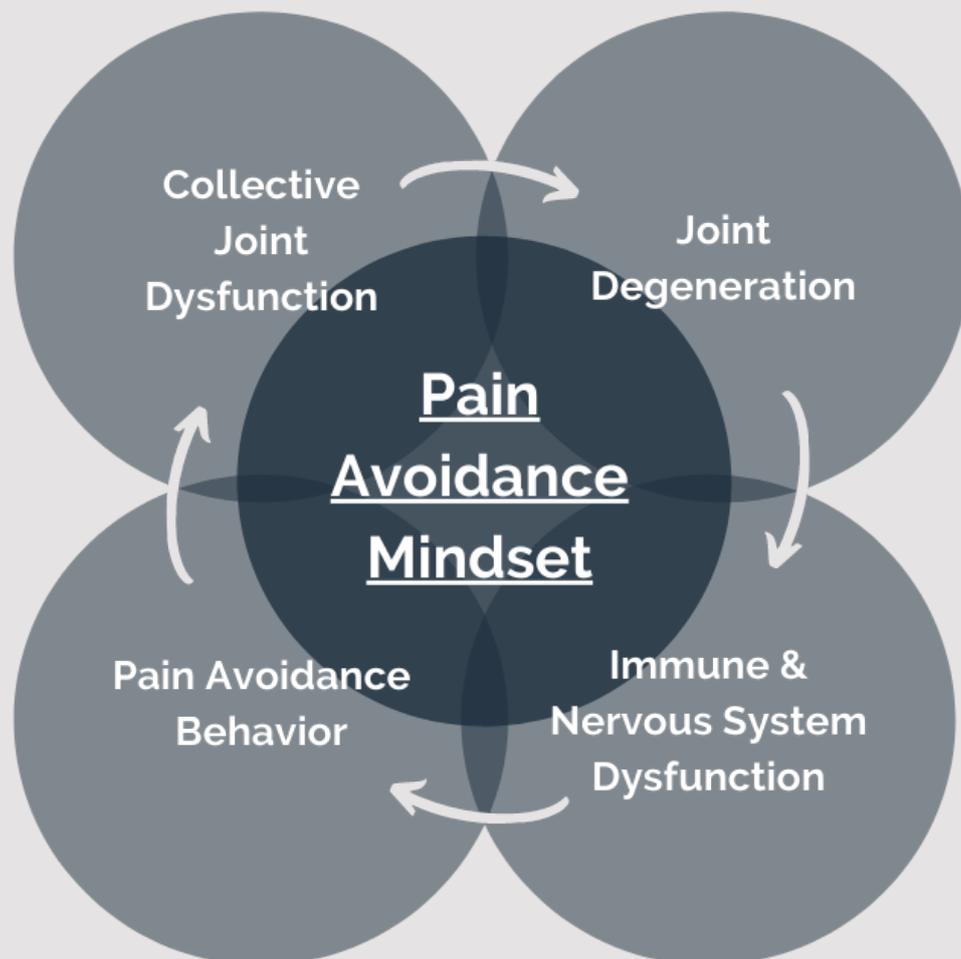
The Quick Start Guide

The Real Problem Isn't Your Pain Signals

The Real Problem Is The Chronic Pain Spiral

Pain is your body's fire alarm signal that there is a potentially dangerous problem that needs your attention. The real problem isn't chronic pain signals, that's just the symptom. The real problem is that you're trapped in a complex web of issues we call The Chronic Pain Spiral.

The Chronic Pain Spiral is when joint dysfunction creates joint degeneration, the constant pain wreaks havoc on your immune system, nervous system, and lifestyle, and that in turn worsens the joint dysfunction and starts the spiral all over again.



Pain signals aren't your enemy. Your multi-layered problems, confusion, and misinformation are your enemies. Not having a step by step plan out of your mess is your enemy.

The Baby Steps

A Proven Plan

What are The Align Baby Steps? A proven, step-by-step plan for healing chronic pain and stewarding your body well.

If you follow the baby steps, you will achieve freedom from Chronic Pain and will have a body that is mobile, stable, and strong. You will avoid joint replacements, pain medications, and years of suffering. You will be able to live abundant life you were meant for.

1

Baby Step One: Become Pain Smart

Gain the knowledge you need to understand your situation, sift through the conflicting opinions, and navigate a direct path out of pain.

2

Baby Step Two: Restore Calm

Reduce nervous system dysfunction, joint tension, and joint resistance to stretch.

3

Baby Step Three: Restore Mobility

Reduce joint tension and restore healthy joint range of motion.

4

Baby Step Four: Restore Stability

Restore function back to atrophied, sleeping muscles responsible for posture and movement stability.

5

Baby Step Five: Restore Strength

Restore sufficient levels of strength and load bearing capacity back to your body.

6

Baby Step Six: Maintain & Enjoy!

Now you get to enjoy! Go use your body for all the amazing ways it was intended; to play, work, serve, and love life with!



1

Baby Step One: Become Pain Smart

When you become Pain Smart, you have the knowledge you need to understand your situation, sift through the noise and conflicting opinions, and confidently navigate a direct path out of pain and towards Your Abundant Life. To achieve this Baby Step you must understand The Pain Smart Principles and the wisdom they hold.

To Achieve Baby Step One

- Understand the wisdom of The Pain Smart Principles
- Understand The Joint, Immune, & Nervous System Basics
- Fill out your Joint Function Scorecard so you know your starting point.

The Pain Smart Principles

Principle 1: The Chronic Pain Experience Principle

The Experience Of Chronic Pain includes your joint dysfunction rubbing and grinding on your joint degeneration, your immune system's reaction to that, and your nervous systems interpretation and reaction to it all. (If you don't understand where you are at, you have a zero percent chance of navigating to where you want to go)

Principle 2: The Real Problem Principle

The Chronic Pain Spiral is when joint dysfunction creates joint degeneration, the constant pain wreaks havoc on your immune system, nervous system, and lifestyle, and that in turn worsens the joint dysfunction and starts the spiral all over again. (If you never know what the real problem is, you have exactly a zero percent chance of solving it)

Principle 3: The Fire Alarm Principle

People who overcome the The Chronic Pain Spiral focus on Complete Healing, not "getting out of pain". (If you never focus on the real problem, you will never solve it)

Principle 4: The North Star Principle

To achieve Complete Healing and live Your Abundant Life, your joints must be mobile, stable, and strong, and your immune system and nervous system must be regulated and healthy. ("You can't hit a target you cannot see, and you cannot see a target you do not have." - Zig Ziglar)

Principle 5: The Good Steward Principle

Good stewards of their body know the Joint, Immune, & Nervous System Basics and own their Joint Maintenance Toolkit. (If you don't know how your body is supposed to work, you have a zero percent chance of keeping it running well. You will be whipped about by every opinion and fooled by every salesman and trickster.

The Baby Step Essentials Content

(available by pointing your camera at the QR code)



The Joint, Immune, & Nervous System Basics
The Joint Maintenance Toolkit
The High Route Challenge
www.experiencealign.com/essentials

The Joint Function Scorecard

The Joint Function Scorecard is a report card for your joint function. It teaches you how your joints are actually supposed to work and gives you a visualization of your progress through The Baby Steps and toward joints that are mobile, stable, and strong.

What do the colors mean?



The Upper Body Basics: Neck Shoulders, & Mid-Back

Mobility

Overhead Reach



Shoulder External Rotation



Neck Rotation



Mid-Back Extension



Spine Rotation



Stability

Upright Scapula & Erect Spine



External Rotator Firing



Scapular Control



Strength

Horizontal Push | Pull



Vertical Push | Pull



The Joint Function Scorecard

The 13 Lower Body Basics: Low Back, Hips, Knees, Ankles, Feet

Mobility

Big Toe Extension

<35 degrees	35-65 degrees	65-90 degrees
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Ankle Flexing

< 30 degrees	30-45 degrees	>45 degrees
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Hip Extension

<0 degrees	0-15 degrees	>15 degrees
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Hip Rotation

< 60 degrees	60-80 degrees	80-90 degrees
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Stability

Square & Mostly Level Pelvis While Standing

>10d rotation >20d anterior	1-10d rotation 15-20d anterior	No rotation 3-15d anterior
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Square & Mostly Level Arch, Ankle, & Hips While Walking

Complete Off-Load >15d Collapse	Partial Off-Load 5-15d Collapse	Bearing Load 0-5 degree
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Hip Flexor, Core, & Breath Control

Diaphragm/Groin Dominance	30 Reps (Bodyweight)	30 Reps (5lb ankle weight)
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Glute Control

Hip Flexor Dominance	30 Reps (Bodyweight)	30 Reps (heavy band)
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Ankle Control

Knee Dominance	15 Reps (Both Directions)	30 Reps (Both Directions)
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Big Toe Control

Ankle Dominance	15 raises 30 press (light band)	15 raises 30 press (medium band)
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Spinal Control

Spine Dominance	10 Sit/Stands 10 Hinges	15+ Sit/Stands 15+ Hinges
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Strength

Sit To Stands

Quad Dominance	<20 reps	20-30 reps
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Deadlifts

Spine Dominance	10 Reps/<40lbs	10 Reps/40-100lbs
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Step Ups

Quad Dominance	20 Reps/<6" Step Height	20 Reps/<6" Step Height
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Calf Raises

<30 Reps Double Leg	30-50 Reps Double Leg	15-30 Reps Single Leg
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Baby Step Two: Restore Calm

Baby Step Two begins the process of restoring calm to your nervous system, your joints, and your immune system. This Baby Step reduces nervous system dysfunction, joint tension, and your joint's resistance to stretch. Achieving these objectives first prepares your body for Baby Step Three where we Restore Mobility. If this Baby Step is skipped, progress through the remaining Baby Steps will be slowed or even stopped entirely. The Baby Steps are in specific order to maximize your speed through this journey. You may feel like you are slowing down or doing nothing in Baby Step Two. That's okay. Trust this journey. Trust The Baby Steps. Sometimes in life, fast is slow, and slow is fast. That wisdom applies beautifully to this portion of your journey.

You are firmly in the portion of your journey we call The Death Zone. Learn what that means or else you risk getting frustrated with the inevitable setbacks that are coming your way. Fortify your mind by knowing where you are at in your journey and what that inevitably looks like. The Baby Steps are the most direct path out of this mess. Walk through them carefully, slowly, and with Focused Intensity (that means do your Deactivation Program every day you can). This Baby Step should take 1-2 weeks to complete.

To Achieve Baby Step Two

- Drink 60oz water
- Consume less than 300mg of caffeine per day
- Reduce inflammation by 80% or more by eliminating dairy and refined sugar and increasing fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins.
- Bring at least one support person into your journey and commit to letting them walk with you through this journey. If you think that motivation or mindset will be a major hurdle, you need a bigger support circle and should partner with a counselor.
- Eliminate all other forms of exercise.
- Eliminate all other problematic movements in order to minimize backward steps while you navigate The Death Zone.

Taking The Step

Do The Deactivations 3-14 times (See The Baby Step Support Content)

Note: If your pain levels are worst in the morning directly out of bed, you likely need to skip The Deactivations, complete the rest of the Baby Step Two Objectives, and then begin your exercise prescriptions at Baby Step Three.

The Baby Step Essential Content

(available by pointing your camera at the QR code)



What is the Death Zone? & How Do I Navigate It?

The Deactivations

Where do surgeries fit into The Baby Steps?

www.experiencealign.com/essentials

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Baby Step Three: Restore Mobility

Baby Step Three is where you restore functional joint range of motion and healthy muscle tension. This Baby Step further reduces nervous system dysfunction. Additionally, you are fixing one half of the joint instability equation (joint instability is characterized by tightness on one side of a joint and weakness on the other). Achieving these objectives in Baby Step Three prepares your body for Baby Step Four where we restore function back to atrophied, sleeping muscles. You cannot achieve Baby Step Four without first achieving Baby Step Three. You cannot restore function back to atrophied muscles while the other side of the joint is clamped down and tensioned. You simply don't have access to those muscles neurologically.

Can you see how important walking through each Baby Step in order is? Good. Trust this journey. Trust The Baby Steps. You are still firmly in The Death Zone so expect set backs, ups and downs, and good days and bad days. They are all part of life in The Death Zone. You will escape The Death Zone once you've gotten through Baby Step Four: Restore Stability. Walk through this Baby Step with Focused Intensity, that means do your Mobility Program every day you can. The Death Zone is not a good place to get comfortable. Get out of it as quickly as you can. This Baby Step should take 2-4 weeks. By the time you complete this Baby Step, your pain levels should be reduced by 20%-40%.

To Achieve Baby Step Three

Restore all Upper Body Mobility Metrics back to functional ranges.

OR

Restore all Lower Body Mobility Metrics back to functional ranges.

Taking The Step

Most people will need to put Focused Intensity into either their upper body or their lower body. Putting all your Focused Intensity on one Joint System (upper or lower body) allows you to see rapid progress and gets you out of the risky Death Zone which always threatens to undermine your determination. To walk through this step, restore all the Mobility Metrics on your Joint Function Scorecard with targeted self myofascial release, static stretching, active stretching, and loaded stretching. An Align Coach can prescribe a specific series of exercises for maximal effectiveness. Expect to go through a well designed Mobilization Routine 7-21 times.

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Baby Step Four: Restore Stability

Baby Step Four is where you restore function back to the atrophied, sleeping muscles responsible for stabilizing your posture, joint position, walking cycle, and key lifestyle movements such as reaching, pushing, pulling, getting down and up from stairs and from a chair, and picking things up off the floor. Continue to walk through this Baby Step with Focused Intensity, that means do your work every day you possibly can. Completing this Baby Step gets your joints stable and allows you to exit The Death Zone. After completing this Baby Step, you will experience significantly less setbacks. It should take you 4-6 weeks to complete Baby Step Four. After completing this Baby Step, your pain levels should be reduced by 40%-60%. Completing Baby Step Four: Restore Stability, prepares you for Baby Step Five where you Restore Strength. Ultimately, you have to be mobile, stable, and strong enough to move and carry yourself through your lifestyle without breaking down. Inevitably though, stability must come before strength. Walk through Baby Step Four with Focused Intensity, expect minor setbacks along the way, stay determined, and stay patient.

To Achieve Baby Step Four

Restore all Lower Body Stability Metrics to functional ranges.

OR

Restore all Upper Body Stability Metrics to functional ranges.

Taking The Step

Primary Step - Achieve this Baby Step with a Stability Program of highly targeted strengthening exercises aimed at restoring function back to atrophied muscles of the upper body or lower body (depending on which joint system you are fixing first). For the upper body that means a program focused on activating and strengthening of the lower traps, rhomboids, serratus anterior, rotator cuff, diaphragm, and tva. For the lower body, that means a program focused on activating and strengthening of the diaphragm, tva, psoas, glutes, ankles, and arches of the feet. An Align Coach can walk you through an optimized Stability Program where the right muscles are actually firing. Expect to go through a well designed Stability Program 14-21 times.

Additional Steps - If you have been in pain for longer than 3-6 months, you likely have memorized pain pathways. Do 30 minutes, 3 days per week of light to moderate intensity cardio to heal memorized pain pathways in your nervous system. Our primary recommendation is bicycling. Cycling requires the least joint mobility and joint stability of any form of cardio and therefore has the least chance of causing set backs. This is also the point where you should begin strategizing with your physician about tapering your pain meds. We do not recommend tapering your pain meds before this step.

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Baby Step Five: Restore Strength

Baby Step Five is where you restore adequate levels of load bearing capacity back to your structure given your body weight, body geometry, and desired lifestyle. That means your muscles, connective tissues, and bones are strong and dense enough to carry your body weight and geometry of your body through your desired lifestyle. Due to wide variations in body weight, body geometry, and desired lifestyles, the "functional" ranges of the Strength Metrics vary widely. An Align Coach can break down where your Functional Ranges need to be set. This Baby Step is where we transition from walking with Focused Intensity to walking with Focused Intentionality. You don't do your Strength Program daily, or as many days per week as you can, like the previous Baby Steps. You do your Strength Program, for the upper or lower body joint system, 2-3 times per week. This is because your muscles, connective tissues, and bones will need time to actually adapt and grow bigger, denser, and stronger. They need rest in order to recover and adapt. Walk through Baby Step Five with Focused Intentionality and expect this Baby Step to take 8-12 weeks to complete and upon completion your pain levels should be reduced by 60%-100%.

Upon starting this Baby Step, we recommend you start walking the other half of your body through The Baby Steps, starting on Baby Step One of course.

To Achieve Baby Step Five

Restore all Lower Body Strength Metrics to functional ranges.

OR

Restore all Upper Body Strength Metrics to functional ranges.

Taking The Step

Achieve this Baby Step by carefully, logically, and systematically challenging your load bearing capacity through the critical movements you do on a daily basis such as pushing, pulling, sitting and standing, picking things off the floor, and climbing steps. An Align Coach can walk with you through an optimized Strength Program.

Every exercise, and every increase in challenge, must be incremental, never increasing any joint loads by more than 5%-10% per week (physics of joint loading can be complicated, seek competent, professional help if you aren't a math and joint nerd).

Additional Steps - Continue the 30 minute, 3 days per week moderate intensity cardio. This Baby Step is where you should be COMPLETELY FREE from pain medications! Celebrate!!!

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Baby Step Six: Maintain & Enjoy!

You are awesome! I couldn't be more proud of you for getting this far into your journey. Now you get to enjoy! You get to use your body in all the amazing ways it was intended; to play, work, serve, and love life with!

Baby Step Six, the final Baby Step, is where you celebrate how far you've come in your journey and look forward to enjoying a functional, capable body for the rest of your life. You still have to steward your body well to maintain what you've earned, but that takes considerably less effort than you've been putting in. Your focus remains in a state of Focused Intentionality, but that Focused Intentionality only expresses itself in a Quarterly Joint Check Up and Maintenance Workouts 1-3 times per week. You get to put your joint maintenance on auto-pilot and enjoy the fruits of your hard work!

You learned how to steward your body well, how it's actually supposed to function, and how to navigate chronic pain with wisdom. You restored calm to your nervous system and you restored mobility, stability, and strength back to your joints. In a world that looks for quick fixes, you chose to take The High Route. You spent 6-12 months rebuilding your body from the ground up.

You are freaking awesome! Enjoy!

To Achieve Baby Step Six

Fill out your Joint Function Scorecard on a quarterly basis, every three months, so you can stay aware of how your joints are functioning. Also, do Maintenance Workouts 1-3 days per week to maintain your joint mobility, stability, and strength. Additional aerobic exercise, such as walking, hiking, or cycling, can be done to maintain nervous system and immune system function.

Taking The Step

Pull out your calendar and build your Maintenance Plan. Decide how many days per week you want to dedicate toward loving and stewarding your body. I recommend 1-3 days per week. Get an intelligently designed Maintenance Plan that maintains all your joint range of motions, joint stability, and strength/load bearing capacity, an Align Coach can walk with you through this.

To Schedule A Consultation With An Align Coach

Point your camera here



Or go to <https://www.experiencealign.com/schedule-your-free-consultation/>