

Publications

The Journal of Pain • Volume 8, No. 5, September 2007

APS members and subscribers to The Journal of Pain may view this issue online at www2.jpain.org. Abstracts and table of contents of each issue of The Journal of Pain are available for online viewing.

The following news highlights summarize selected articles in the September 2007 issue of *The Journal of Pain*, the peer-reviewed scientific journal of APS.

Note: The opinions and ideas expressed in articles appearing in *The Journal of Pain* do not necessarily reflect those of the editor and publisher or of the American Pain Society.

Positive Thinking Helps Children Tolerate Pain

Qian Lu, Jennie C.I. Tsao, Cynthia D. Myers and Lonnie K Zeltzer, Pediatric Pain Program, David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA

A study gauging responses to laboratory-induced pain in healthy children and adolescents showed that positive self-statements and behavioral distraction help reduce acute pain responses. These findings could have implications for managing children undergoing painful medical procedures.

Researchers from UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine Pediatric Pain Program studied 244 subjects ages 8 to 18 and exposed them to four different experimental pain stimuli. Laboratory pain studies have the advantage of controlling the administration of painful stimuli across participants. The study found that when internalizing, catastrophizing, or seeking emotional support were used as coping mechanisms, the subjects showed higher pain intensity. When coping was evidenced by making positive self statements or distraction, the subjects showed higher pain tolerance.

The authors concluded that in healthy children internalizing, catastrophizing, and seeking emotional support are pain-prone coping strategies, while positive self-statements and behavioral distraction are pain-resistant strategies. They also noted the findings might be more relevant for children experiencing acute pain in a clinical setting, such as procedural pain in a doctor's office or emergency department.