This is How Technology Will Solve Chronic Pain

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The technological revolution has brought with it unprecedented medical innovations. Today, antibiotics and drugs are universally known and utilized, surgical procedures are safer and more efficient than ever, and easily accessible databases house patients' comprehensive health records and guide doctors as they select the most viable treatment options.

However, medicine's tech-fueled growth has been uneven; while certain specialties have experienced far-reaching improvements, others — most conspicuously the musculoskeletal sphere — are lagging behind the curve, to the detriment of millions upon millions of patients.

Approximately 20 percent of Americans suffer from chronic pain, and nearly *20 million* Americans suffer from high-impact chronic pain, which prevents them both from working and from enjoying their lives.

Musculoskeletal education is largely glossed over in medical schools, and consequently, the lion's share of today's doctors —at no fault of their own — lack the knowledge and experience required to effectively treat chronic pain.

But the end of chronic pain's prevalence, as well as patients' overwhelming lack of access to high-quality care, appears to be within sight. The solution, simply enough, is artificial intelligence (AI).

In the not-so-distant future, artificial intelligence will optimize the way chronic pain is treated by making it easier for patients to find doctors and medical providers who have a proven record of helping people feel better.

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Why there's a chronic pain crisis

Currently, after being hurt in a sporting mishap, automobile collision or different type of accident, virtually all chronic-pain sufferers book appointments with doctors simply because *they're doctors* — not because they've learned the ins and outs of musculoskeletal medicine.

Patients correctly assume that their serious pain requires urgent care, but because they don't know which medical professionals are best suited to provide that care, they're rushing to receive treatment that fails to address the underlying issue and afford them the relief that they deserve.

Moreover, chronic pain's nuances and complexities introduce another commonly overlooked element to the dilemma: Even seasoned musculoskeletal care providers specialize in repairing *specific injuries and parts of the body*. An otherwise highly qualified chronic-care expert may not possess the experience and the background to optimally assist the sufferer at hand.

AI is the key to overcoming these and other hurdles related to finding the exact right provider for the injury.

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How AI can relieve chronic pain

Artificial intelligence is uniquely capable of guiding chronic-pain sufferers towards the treatment that bodes best for their long-term health.

To initiate the process, AI will evaluate the medical history, physical needs and underlying health factors of the patient, before cross-referencing this data with an up-to-date directory of all nearby chronic-pain specialists and musculoskeletal professionals.

Right off the bat, this works to guarantee that people have the opportunity to choose a doctor whose skills will truly help their condition.

From there, through a series of additional questions, AI will further filter neighborhood care providers based upon an array of patient-disclosed preferences and needs, including affordability and distance, plus the overall effectiveness of healthcare professionals in remedying chronic pain, according to historical records of treatment success.

Objective third parties will curate these historical records and other statistics. In turn, bias-free AI suggestions will consist only of the top 20 percent of specialists in a given area.

AI has the potential to grant the 50 million or so Americans who already suffer from chronic pain – and those who will, unfortunately, begin suffering from it as the result of a future accident – the ability to find reliable care, take charge of their health, feel their best and beat one of society's most insidious and neglected afflictions.

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A future with less pain

The widespread use of AI to map chronic-pain treatments won’t arrive overnight, but all signs indicate that it will become commonplace sooner rather than later.

Contemporary tech is more than capable of handling the task, and it goes without saying that not a few patients are eager to alleviate their chronic pain. Every step that the medical community takes towards implementing AI solutions in the chronic-care sphere today will pave the way for meaningful improvements tomorrow.

And sometime in the near future, doctors, trauma-treatment professionals and patients alike will find that the chronic-care landscape has changed dramatically and that its evolution was spurred by the adoption of AI.

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