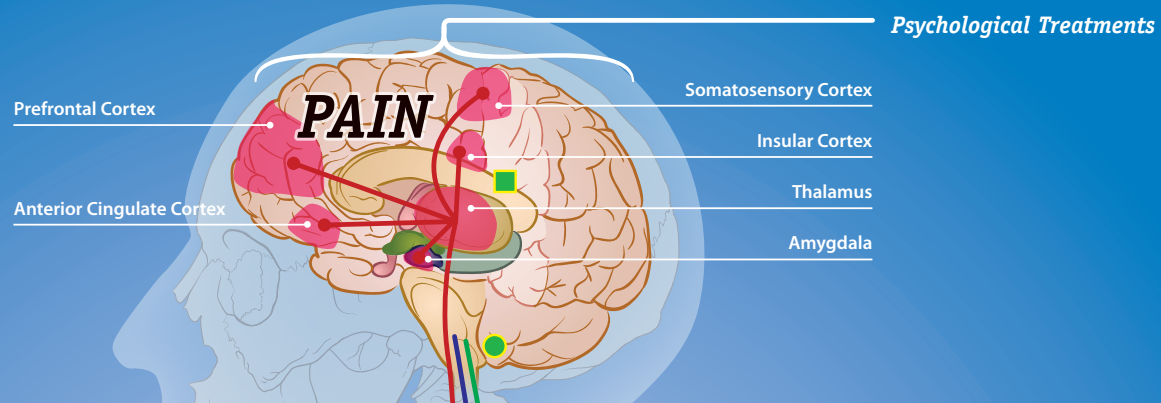
painexplained

Pain Pathways and Medications

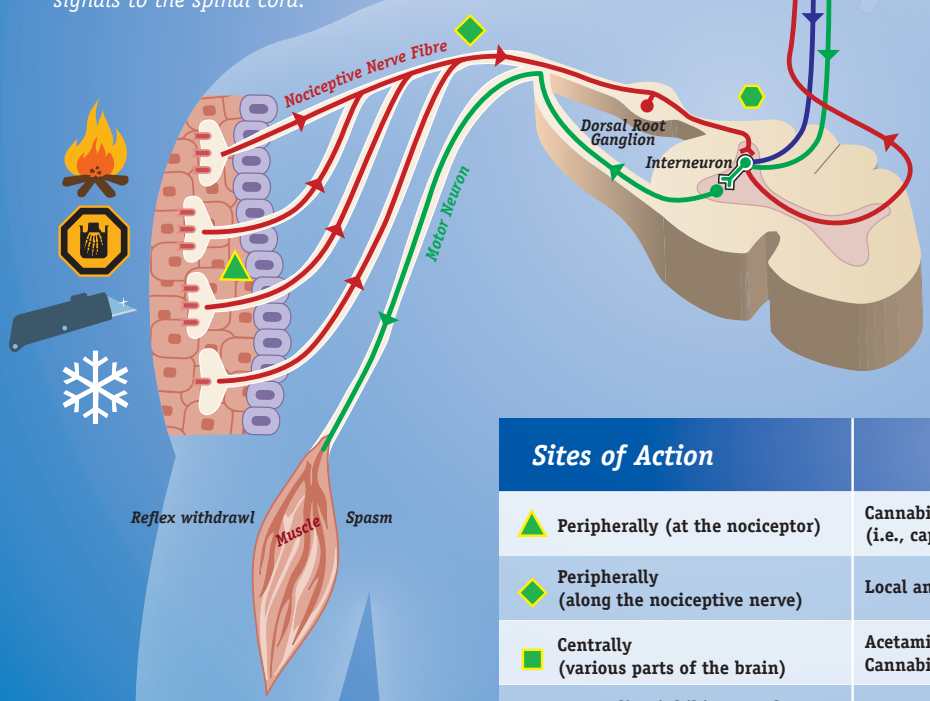
3 *Thoughts, feelings and beliefs change the pain signals into the individual's experience of "**PAIN**".*



4 *Certain parts of the brain generate signals that travel back down the **spinal cord** to reduce or increase pain signals at the interneuron.*

Ascending Pain Signal
Descending Inhibitory Signal
Descending Excitatory Signal

1 ***Painful Stimuli** or tissue damage activate specialized nerve cells (nociceptors), which in turn send pain signals to the spinal cord.*



2 *Pain signals enter the **dorsal horn of the spinal cord**, where some are increased or decreased by the interneuron before continuing up to the brain.*

Sites of Action	Medications
Peripherally (at the nociceptor)	Cannabinoids, NSAIDs, Opioids, Tramadol, Vanilloid receptor antagonists (i.e., capsaicin)
Peripherally (along the nociceptive nerve)	Local anaesthetics, Anticonvulsants (except the gabapentinoids)
Centrally (various parts of the brain)	Acetaminophen, Anticonvulsants (except the gabapentinoids), Cannabinoids, Opioids, Tramadol
Descending inhibitory pathway in the spinal cord	Cannabinoids, Opioids, Tramadol, Tricyclic antidepressants, SNRIs
Dorsal horn of the spinal cord	Anticonvulsants, Cannabinoids, Gabapentinoids, NMDA receptor antagonists, Opioids, Tramadol, Tricyclic antidepressants, SNRIs

For additional information, visit:

the CANADIAN PAIN SOCIETY
la SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE de la DOULEUR

Canadian Pain Coalition

painexplained.ca
GETTING ANSWERS FOR PAIN

The Canadian Pain Foundation

ASSOCIATION QUÉBÉCOISE DE LA DOULEUR CHRONIQUE