

- Another excellent study, conducted at the National Institutes of Health's Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, got around the "blind" problem by testing two different strengths of magnets on people diagnosed with chronic sciatica (low back pain radiating down their leg). The size, construction, weight, and arrangement of the magnets along the spine were all strictly controlled, and the treatment period lasted for five weeks. Leg pain was significantly reduced by the stronger magnets.
- In a Harvard Medical School study of 29 patients with painful osteoarthritis of the knee, treatments were given in a clinic setting for four hours, eliminating the possibility of ruining the placebo effect. The pain scores decreased by 79 points in the treatment group, versus only 10 points in the placebo group.
- Patients suffering from the painful symptoms of diabetic neuropathy enjoyed significantly less burning, numbness, tingling, and exercise-induced foot pain when treated with magnet therapy. These benefits occurred gradually, over about four months' time.
- A review study found that among 42 scientific reports, 37 showed that magnets brought significant pain relief, especially when magnets were placed on trigger points rather than directly on where it hurt.

So, certain kinds of magnet therapy can effectively treat certain kinds of pain. The professionals most likely to be up on the potential for magnet therapy in the treatment of pain are physical therapists.

In addition to whether it works, another piece of the research puzzle is *how*. Studies show that a magnetic field has a direct effect on nerves by inhibiting their ability to chemically transmit the electrochemical message of pain from one neuron to the next.