Imaging the Transition from Acute to Chronic Pain

A. Vania Apkarian, Ph.D.
Professor in Departments of Physiology, Anesthesiology, and Physical Med & Rehabilitation
Northwestern University

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Dr. Apkarian has studied pain for two decades, both in animal models and fMRI studies in humans. His current interests include cortical dynamics of pain as well as brain plasticity. His overall goal is the uncovering of brain mechanisms underlying the subjective or qualitative properties of the pain experience. This work aims to alleviate clinical pain conditions and achieve a more profound theoretical and mechanistic understanding of the brain. A recent emphasis has been studying sub-acute back pain patients during the transition to chronicity. This data was collected from patients, half of whom recovered from pain while the remaining half persist in pain, a phenomenon we have recently linked to abnormal limbic brain circuitry.

For additional information contact Jamie Holmes at 353-5617