

## **Phantom Pain Relief**

There are an increasing number of ways of fighting Phantom Pain. More often than not medications are the first line of management. It is important also, to consider both traditional and non - traditional methods of pain relief. Physical treatment may include massaging, touching or rubbing the painful area to relax the muscles and stimulate the nerves. Acupressure and acupuncture, both traditional Chinese techniques may be used to block the pain nerve impulses or energy flow to the brain. Acupressure is the application of pressure to certain special points in the body, whilst acupuncture uses fine needles inserted into certain parts of the body to create a similar effect. Magnet therapy is another non - traditional therapy, which places magnets over the affected area which are said to improve blood flow and thus decrease phantom pain. Medications may include.

- Narcotics - which work on nerve centres and the brain. These medications work fast and wear off quickly and are often used immediately following surgery to relieve pain. There is an inherent risk of physical addiction in longer term use of these medications.
- Anti - seizure medication - These can be effective in calming excitable nerves within the residual limb. Some people report that they have minimized the number of episodes of phantom pain.
- Anti-inflammatory medications - These reduce the inflammation at the site of the injury and so may indirectly have a role in treating phantom pain.
- Anti-depressant medications - Some of these medications are also used to treat chronic pain. There are a range of side effects.