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IM: What causes pain?

DR. MACADAEG: It's difficult to understand how pain works—in a lot of cases, we don't even know why it's persistent. I've spent a lot of time trying to figure out where exactly it's coming from. Thirty percent of spinal pain can never be figured out because you can't get to the structures.

IM: In general, how can pain be prevented?

DR. MACADAEG: By leading a healthier lifestyle. I encourage my patients to eat right and stay active. If people would spend time keeping their bodies and minds conditioned, it would solve a lot of their problems.

IM: But once someone has pain—whether it's from something temporary or something chronic—what exactly can you offer them? Aspirin?

Morphine? Massage? Talk therapy?

DR. MACADAEG: We don't just manage pain. We focus on the source of the pain, and then we can do many things, from physical therapy to minimally invasive procedures to surgery.

IM: Can too much pain medication lead to drug resistance?

DR. MACADAEG: That's a natural problem. Tolerance is a normal thing that occurs when people take medicine, so the idea is to take just enough to help control pain.

IM: What's the most outrageous story someone's told you to try to get pain medicine?

DR. MACADAEG: People tell us their dog ate their medicines, or that their house was broken into and their medication was stolen. We've heard just about everything.

IM: Why are baby boomers fueling the growth in this specialty?

DR. MACADAEG: I think the younger generations generally don't tolerate pain as well as older generations. They require more attention. Older generations are used to biting the bullet. Baby boomers are more in tune with their bodies and know what hurts them and what helps them.

IM: Is pain really just the inevitable result of getting old?

DR. MACADAEG: People wouldn't see me if they stayed active and healthy—if they were in tune with their mind, body and overall health. +

**Kevin
Macadaeg, M.D.**

specializes in pain medicine
at the Indiana Spine Group

