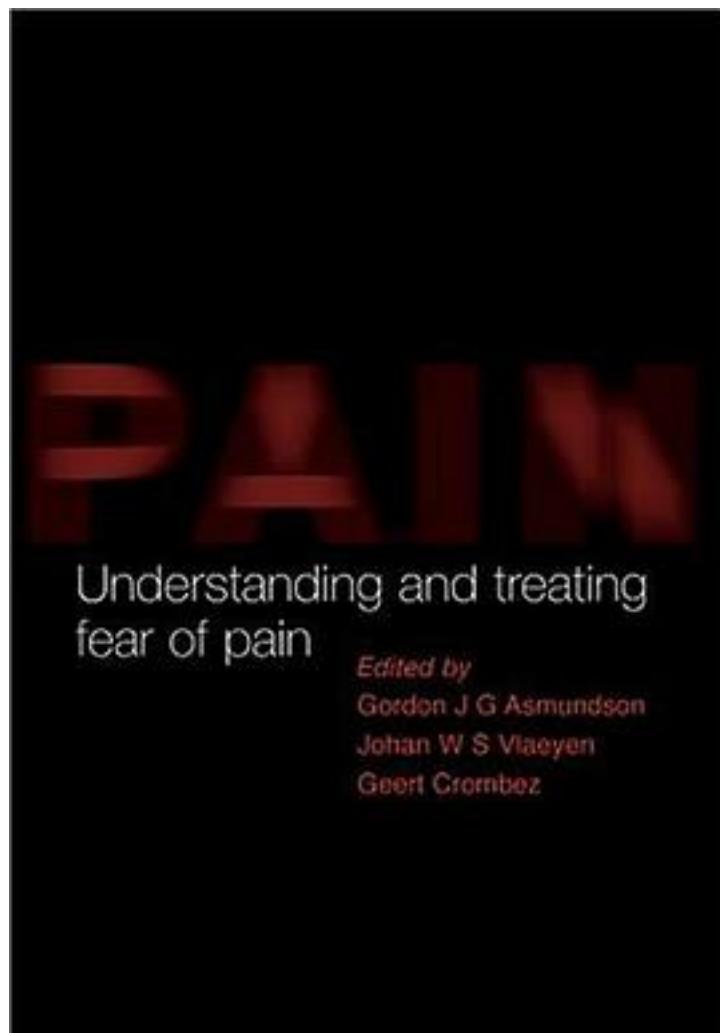


# Understanding and Treating the Fear of Pain



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出版者:Oxford Univ Pr

出版时间:2004-9

装帧:HRD

isbn:9780198525141

People who suffer from chronic pain are typically found to be more anxious and fearful of pain than those who do not. Recent evidence has shown that the fear itself serves as a mechanism through which chronic pain is maintained over time. Even once the muscle or tissue damage is healed, a fear of further pain can lead to avoidance behaviour, which over time, leads to deconditioning (e.g. decreased mobility, weight gain). This in turn leads to further pain experiences, negative expectancies, and strengthened avoidance. It is the reciprocal relationship between fear and avoidance that is thought to be responsible for maintaining pain behaviour and disability. With fear of pain known to cause significant suffering and functional disability, there is a need for a greater understanding of this condition. This is the first book to explore this topic. It starts by introducing the current theoretical positions regarding pain-related fear and anxiety along with relevant empirical findings. It then provides comprehensive coverage of assessment issues and treatment strategies. Finally, the book suggests further areas for investigation. Pain-related fear and anxiety are now receiving considerable attention, and efficient and effective treatments are fast becoming available. This book will help guide and extend our understanding of a condition that has been shown to be associated with substantial suffering and disability.

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