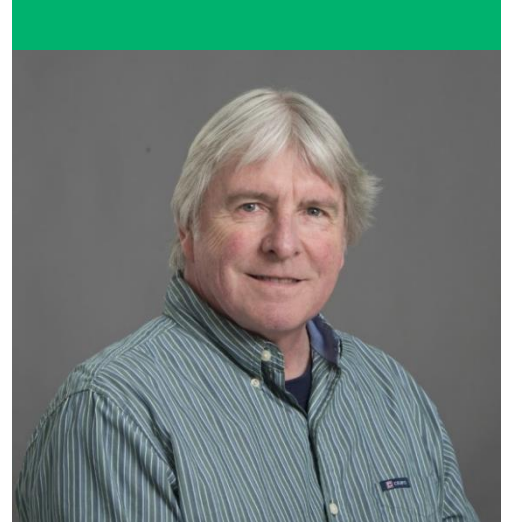


## John W. Burns, PhD

The Cynthia Oudejans Harris, MD, Professor of Psychiatry

### Advancement of Medicine

My research investigates so-called psychosocial processes in chronic pain among humans. My work in recent years has revolved around three issues: 1) understanding the day-to-day interplay of pain, emotions, behavior and medication use in adjustment to chronic pain; 2) examining how psychosocial interventions for chronic pain work and for whom they work; and 3) evaluating new, especially simpler, psychosocial interventions for chronic pain. My work is supported by the National Institutes of Health, or NIH, and the U.S. Department of Defense. I share reports of my work in top-tier journals devoted to the study of pain.



### Research

I have been the recipient of this endowment for approximately three years. The impact of the endowment on my research activities has been considerable. Funds from the endowment allow me to employ a full-time research coordinator. The research coordinator conducts many administrative tasks I once performed, such as obtaining Rush Institutional Review Board approvals and ensuring compliance with funding agency regulations. This frees me to work on grant proposals and research reports. The coordinator was instrumental in helping us design, draft and submit NIH grant applications this year. She will perform this role for all upcoming grant application cycles.

Endowment funds have also allowed us to run two pilot projects. The first project examined whether we can improve circadian rhythms to enhance sleep quality among older adults, and it was completed on December 1, 2025. The results of this project were incorporated into an NIH grant application as preliminary data. These data are critical to support our contention that the proposed project is feasible and worthwhile. The second project seeks to determine the effectiveness of single-session psychosocial treatments for people with chronic pain. Funds for this pilot project are



critical for our group to gather the data needed to support another NIH grant application regarding brief treatments in the coming year.

## Grants

- U01AT011337; NIH/NCCIH. Improving Physical Function in Adults With Chronic Pain. A Multisite Feasibility Study. Dates: 4/01/2021-3/31/2025. Project role: Site-PI.
- 1UM1 NS112874-01; NIH/NINDS. Transition from Acute to Chronic Pain in Total Knee Arthroplasty Patients: Identifying Resilience and Vulnerability Profiles. Dates: 7/1/19–1/31/26. Project role: Multi-PI.
- R01DA050334-01; NIH/NIDA. Stress and Opioid Misuse Risk: The Role of Endogenous Opioid and Endocannabinoid Mechanisms. Dates: 6/1/21–5/30/26. Project role: Co-I.
- W81XWH2210739; DoD. Preventing the Development of Chronic Pain: Treating PTSD at Acute Pain Onset. Dates: 9/30/22–8/30/26. Project role: PI.
- R01NR020610-01; NIH/NINR. Comparative Mechanisms (Mediators, Moderators) of Psychosocial Chronic Pain Treatments. Dates: 11/01/22-10/31/27. Project role: Multi-PI.

## Publication Highlights – Abbreviated

- Day MA, Ciol MA, Ehde DM, Mendoza ME, Borckardt J, Newman AK, Chan JF, Friedly JL, Reed DE 2nd, Drever SA, Burns J, Thorn BE, Jensen MP. The Effects of Psychological Treatments for Chronic Pain on Reducing Opioid Use in People at Risk for Opioid Misuse: A Randomized Feasibility Trial. *Pain Pract.* 2026 Jan 26(1):e70107.
- Burgess HJ, Rodgers AA, McNeil KA, Mott J, Fejer A, Dereski T, Rizvydeen M, Sibille KT, Kim HM, Cofield C, Burns JW, Shaikh S, Hassett AL. At Home Morning Bright Light Treatment for Chronic Nociceptive Pain: A Protocol for A Randomized Clinical Trial. *JMIR Res Protoc.* 2025 Aug 28.
- Greenberg J, Hooker JE, McDermott KA, La Camera DE, Brewer JR, Szapary CL, Somers TJ, Keefe F, Kelleher SA, Fisher HM, Burns J, Jeddi R, Kulich R, Polykoff GI, Parker RA, Vranceanu AM; THRIVE Study Team; Diachina A, Hogan S, Chou N, Yates L. Feasibility of a Mind-Body Program for Chronic Pain: A Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Netw Open.* 2025 Jun 2;8(6):e2515685.



- **Burns JW.** Mechanisms in Psychosocial Treatments of Chronic Pain: What Does the Evidence Tell Us? *Curr Opin Psychol.* 2025 Aug;64:102050.
- Fisher HM, Kelleher SA, Somers TJ, Keefe FJ, Hooker JE, McDermott KA, La Camera DE, Brewer JR, **Burns J**, Jeddi RW, Kulich R, Polykoff G, Parker RA, Greenberg J, Vranceanu AM. Relationships Between Pain Cognitions and Physical Function in a Sample of Racially Diverse, Sedentary Individuals With Chronic Pain. *Pain Pract.* 2025 Apr;25(4):e70031.

## The Year Ahead: 2026 and Beyond

We will prioritize the following research: 1) examining how psychosocial interventions for chronic pain work and for whom they work; 2) evaluating new, brief (two to three sessions) psychosocial interventions for chronic pain; and 3) determining whether we can effectively improve the quality of life among people suffering from chronic medical conditions with psychosocial (non-medical) interventions particularly focusing on altering poor sleep habits.

## With Gratitude

I am grateful to the donors of the Cynthia Oudejans Harris, MD, Professor of Psychiatry endowment, which provides critical support for my research endeavors. I deeply appreciate the faith they place in me to use the associated funds wisely to advance the study of medical science.