

What is Pain Awareness Month?

During Pain Awareness Month, various organizations work to raise public awareness of chronic pain and pain management. About 100 million Americans suffer from chronic pain.

What is chronic pain?

Chronic pain is pain that lasts longer than six months. Living with chronic pain can be hard and can cause unhealthy effects in your everyday life. Chronic pain can be mild or severe. It can happen from time to time or all the time. It can be a bother, or it can be so bad that it keeps you from doing what you need to do every day.

Pain is a warning that a problem needs attention. With chronic pain, pain signals remain active in your nervous system for months or even years. This can take both a physical and emotional toll on you. The most common sources of pain are headaches, joint pain, injuries, and backaches.

Other kinds of chronic pain include tendinitis, sinus pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, and pain affecting parts of the body like the shoulders, pelvis, and neck. Generalized (allover) muscle or nerve pain can also develop into a chronic condition.

Mobile apps

- [My Pain Diary](#)
- [Pain Diary & Forum – CatchMyPain](#)
- [WebMD](#)
- [Curable](#)

Tips from our docs

This month, our healthy tip is brought to you by **Duane Ross, MD**, our Medical Director.

Pain starts in *receptor nerve cells* located under your skin and in organs throughout your body. Chronic pain may start with an initial trauma/injury or infection, or there may be an ongoing cause of pain. Some people suffer chronic pain without any past injury or evidence of body damage.

The symptoms of chronic pain include:

- Mild to severe pain that does not go away.
- Pain that may be described as shooting, burning, aching, or electrical.
- The feeling of discomfort, soreness, tightness, or stiffness.

Pain doesn't exist alone. Other problems associated with pain can include:

- Fatigue
- Sleeplessness
- Withdrawal from normal activity and an increased need to rest
- A weakened immune system
- Changes in mood, including hopelessness, fear, depression, irritability, anxiety, and stress
- Disability

More resources

- [American Chronic Pain Association](#)
- [WebMD: Pain Management Health Center](#)