

FACT:

CHRONIC PAIN AFFECTS MORE AMERICANS THAN HEART DISEASE, CANCER AND DIABETES COMBINED¹

1. American Academy of Pain Medicine

CHRONIC PAIN

100 MILLION

Diabetes

(diagnosed and estimated undiagnosed)

25.8 million

Coronary Heart Disease

(heart attack and chest pain)

16.3 million

Stroke

7.0 million

Cancer

11.9 million



WHAT IS PAIN?

Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience (symptom), associated with actual or potential tissue damage.

Pain is a subjective feeling (only you can define your pain). Each person learns what pain is from experiences related to injuries they had in early life. Perception (feelings, beliefs, desires and tolerance) varies widely among individuals and currently cannot be measured accurately by others (objective). Pain continuing for months to years is classified as chronic.



TREATMENT OF PAIN

Treatment for pain should not only be with medications but include other more effective methods, depending on the cause.

All pain medicines, called analgesics, are chemicals so they all have side effects that vary. Some problems may be worse if you smoke, drink alcohol, are overweight or have other chronic problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma or other lung diseases.



QUESTION:

DOES PAIN GET WORSE AT NIGHT OR DOES IT JUST FEEL WORSE?

ANSWER:

Resting should make you feel better. At night, there are fewer distractions so the mind focuses more on the injury so the "pain" may actually feel worse. Happy thoughts help!

DID YOU KNOW?



Some over-the-counter pain medications like Advil and Tylenol, when taken for too long or at too high a dose, can cause damage to the liver, kidneys or other parts of the body.

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS

Fatigue, depression, anxiety

Chronic constipation, inability to sleep

Breathing problems, irregular heartbeats, loss of muscle strength

Decreased libido and potential infertility due to low testosterone in males

Menstrual irregularities and breast feeding issues in females

Compromised immune system

OPIOIDS

Also called narcotics, these drugs have been around for centuries. You have probably heard of morphine, heroin and OxyContin (naturally from the opium plant) and man-made varieties like methadone. Some are stronger than others (e.g., OxyContin is 1.5 times more potent than morphine).



Some are short-acting/immediate release to relieve peak levels of pain over 4-6 hours



Others are long-acting/extended release and work for 8-12 hours

When they are not taken for cancer pain, they can actually work in reverse and cause more pain (can happen as soon as 2 months).

Pain medicines have never been shown to cure pain on their own. Because of their serious side effects they should only be used short term (6 months or less) with other treatments such as physical therapy or talk (psycho) therapy.

FACT:

PAIN MEDICATIONS KILL UP TO
100 PEOPLE
SUDDENLY EACH DAY²



2. CDC. Vital Signs: Overdoses of Prescription Opioid Pain Relievers.

GOOD NEWS – THESE SIDE EFFECTS DON'T HAVE TO BE PERMANENT AND MAY BE REVERSED WITH DETOX OR WEANING OFF THESE DRUGS.

You should never stop these medications on your own but with medical supervision. Best results come when you learn ways to control your pain using your mind and positive thoughts and actions. Remember it's your body, your health and you are worth it!

TAKE CHARGE!

OTHER WAYS TO HELP WITH PAIN



- 1 Eat foods with less sugar, saturated fats, less frying and less salt
- 2 Eat berries, oranges, apples and vegetables of all colors
- 3 Eat fish like salmon, mackerel, tuna or sardines
- 4 Stop smoking
- 5 Read light, funny stories to help you fall asleep at night
- 6 Walk to your gate or next door to say "Hi!"
- 7 Each day try to do more activity