

Chronic pain, which is defined as pain that is persistent and ongoing, may make it difficult to perform normal activities. It may also affect relationships and hamper job performance. Some people may develop chronic intermittent pain, which is pain that may flare up for a period of time and then subside.

Chronic pain typically comes from two sources:

- ▶ Neuropathic (pain caused by nerves)
- ▶ Myofascial (pain emanating from muscles and soft tissue)

It is not unusual for a person to have a combination of neuropathic and myofascial pain.

Chronic pain may result from a number of conditions, including:

- ▶ An injury that has not healed correctly
- ▶ Stress-related muscular tension
- ▶ Autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus
- ▶ Repetitive strain injury (RSI)
- ▶ Age-related conditions, such as osteoarthritis

Common effects of chronic pain include:

- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Irritability, anger, or mood swings
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Sleep or appetite disturbances
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating
- ▶ Inability to perform favorite activities

Medication may help with managing chronic pain, but over time, the user may develop a tolerance and need increased doses. People who are taking prescription medication should work with a physician to manage its use.

Chronic Pain

Other options for managing chronic pain include:

- ▶ Exercise, stretching, or yoga
- ▶ Massage, physical therapy, or chiropractic treatment
- ▶ Mindful meditation

If you are coping with the effects of chronic pain, LifeMatters can help. Call 24/7/365.

Source: The Kenneth Peters Center for Recovery



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