

## Chronic Pain

Category : Pain

Published by [Chapster](#) on 2004/2/22

Chronic pain must be taken seriously, and its victims should be heard and understood. Skilled practitioners should be sought out for treatment. Some steps to help with treatment.

This was featured on the Community Focus program on KEOM 88.5FM. It was taped at the KEOM studios.

Chronic Pain  
February 18, 2004

### **Q: So, Mike, what are we taking about today?**

A: Today, I thought that weâ€™d talk a little bit about chronic pain. Those who live with chronic pain live under a constant cloud. For most of us, we have mostly good days, and the bad days are few enough in number, that we chalk them up as flukes. But, for those who live in pain, the bad days frequently outnumber the good, family and friends have grown tired of hearing about the pain, and itâ€™s hard to feel good about much of anything. Despite efforts to better educate health care professionals, medical staff often continue to minimize patients and their pain. This widespread pattern of neglect and ignorance only augments the pain that is felt, adding an emotional component of guilt, self-doubt, and feelings of being misunderstood.

### **Q: So, how then should we look at pain?**

A: We must learn to accept that pain is as the person states it. That assumption dignifies the experience of those enduring pain. Sometimes, when you clearly indicate that you understand that they are hurting, people in pain very visibly begin to relax. They are so used to people NOT understanding. People in pain come to the place where they close themselves off from their family and friends, just because they feel they canâ€™t talk about their suffering and be heard and understood.

### **Q: What can we do to alleviate chronic pain?**

A: There are a growing number of resources available to address chronic pain. There are many new treatments, with more coming regularly. There are new kinds of resources, such as the internet, with pain diaries, online support groups, and medication information. And, theoretically at least, there is a greater understanding of the nature of pain. Unfortunately, with our society being so prone to addiction, some of the resources that we have available are minimized, and some of the understanding that we would hope might be there, isnâ€™t.

At any rate, the first thing that needs to be done is to do something about the pain, like seeing a pain specialist. This is not someone who just writes prescriptions, but someone who listens. A physician will likely ask listeners to begin the process of writing a pain diary. This itself may seem like a pain,

but it is essential to treatment. Careful notes should be taken by patients when they meet with physicians. Sadly, insurance companies are notorious for finding ways to opt out of chronic pain treatment. It is essential that notes be taken, that the patient compare the doctor's proposal with their formulary and the insurance companies stated policies. Appointment names and dates and times should be recorded. People in chronic pain don't need the additional burden of financial pressure due to unpaid claims.

**Q: When they meet with a physician, what should they do?**

A: For whatever reason, probably because they have had so many problems with the health care system, and perhaps it is someone endemic to being in chronic pain, but folks who are in pain often have difficulty being compliant with doctor's orders. If they have a physician they trust, it is essential that they try to be as compliant as possible with the suggested treatment. Physicians must have a baseline of treatment before moving on to plan b. The doctor should try to explain the proposed course of treatment and its rationale. If it doesn't make sense, try to get it again. If it still doesn't make sense, consider another physician.

**Q: Briefly, what else should we keep in mind when we consider this issue?**

Chronic pain is so all encompassing that we begin to define ourselves by the pain we are enduring. I think we are wise to remind ourselves that we are more than what we are going through. And that we try, as hard as we can, to do things that validate who we are and we want for our lives.