

BURNING

CRAWLING

STABBING

SHOCKING

FREEZING

YOUR MYSTERY PAIN
COULD HAVE A NAME

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www.nerve-pain.co.uk

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR
ABOUT NEUROPATHIC PAIN

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DO YOU SUFFER FROM AN UNEXPLAINED PAIN?

You may have picked up this leaflet because you suffer from pain you do not know the source of, that is not relieved by typical painkillers. The pain may have been with you for longer than you would expect – maybe a few months or even more. If you are troubled or tormented by a pain that you cannot explain or relieve then it might be neuropathic pain.

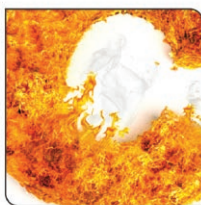
WHAT IS NEUROPATHIC PAIN?

Pain is the body's normal response in letting us know when something is not working properly or when an injury occurs. This type of pain serves an important warning or protective role, to prevent further damage to the injured site.

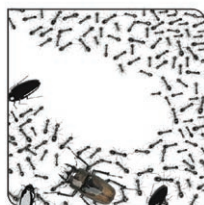
Neuropathic pain is a type of chronic pain that results from damage to either the nerves that normally sense pain or parts of the nervous system that transmit pain signals, such as the spine or the brain. Neuropathic pain has no protective function and needs to be properly diagnosed and appropriately treated.

There are a number of causes of neuropathic pain, for example, diabetes, shingles, some chronic back problems, cancer, or injury following an accident or surgery.

How would you describe your pain?



Burning pain



Crawling pain

ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT NEUROPATHIC PAIN

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you think that you have neuropathic pain, visit your doctor. Be prepared to clearly describe the pain you feel and which part of your body it affects. It may also help the doctor if you let them know:

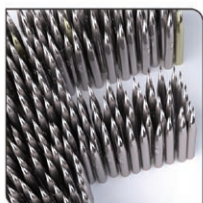
- What the pain feels like
- When the pain began
- If the pain feels as though it is radiating or spreading
- How severe the pain is
- How often the pain occurs e.g. at certain times of the day or after certain activities

Let your doctor know whether the pain affects your work, sleep, social or private life. Fully and clearly describing your symptoms and the impact they have on your life will mean that your doctor can make the correct diagnosis and determine the best treatment for you.

EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT

Everybody's pain is different. If you have neuropathic pain, the pain you have can be felt anywhere in your body and you may experience one or more of the sensations listed here:

- Burning
- Crawling
- Stabbing
- Shocking
- Freezing



Stabbing
pain



Shocking
pain



Freezing
pain

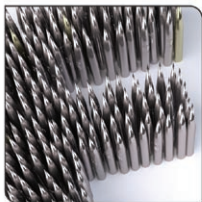
HOW CAN YOU MANAGE YOUR PAIN?

There are some simple things you can do that will help you to manage your pain:

- **Keep a pain diary**, noting down the worst and mildest pains you felt in the last 24 hours, or over the past few weeks, anything you did that triggered the pain or made it feel better, and whether your pain is interfering with your sleep
- **Talk openly about your pain** with family and friends
- **Regularly discuss your pain with your doctor**, especially if it is not improving or you have concerns
- **Get advice from your doctor about exercise and relaxation techniques that may help you**
- **Remember that pain can be a long-term condition that needs long-term management, so be realistic**

WHY SHOULD YOU DEAL WITH YOUR PAIN ALONE WHEN HELP IS AVAILABLE?

The pain you feel is real and, with the correct help, could be effectively managed. Make an appointment with your doctor and describe your symptoms clearly. Your doctor could be able to provide a diagnosis for your pain and will discuss the treatment options with you. With the appropriate treatment you should feel better, however it is likely that your pain will not totally disappear.



Stabbing
pain



Shocking
pain



Freezing
pain

FINDING THE RIGHT TREATMENT

Knowing the best way to discuss and communicate your symptoms with your doctor is a big step towards finding the right treatment for you. You may be offered a number of options, including:

- Medicines
- Physical therapies (such as heat treatment)
- Physiotherapy (stretching and strengthening exercises)
- TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation)
- Psychological methods (relaxation techniques, psychotherapeutic methods)
- Acupuncture

Because neuropathic pain can vary between patients, the way that doctors treat it may vary as well.

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR PAIN

Living with neuropathic pain can be frustrating and exhausting. By getting a diagnosis of neuropathic pain, you can take the first steps to finding the right treatment for you. There is no guarantee that you will be totally pain-free. You may have to try several different treatments before you find one that is right.

A MYSTERY SOLVED?

If the symptoms described in this leaflet sound like the pain you have then make an appointment to see your doctor. Take this leaflet and, if you need to, use it to help describe your pain to your doctor. The mystery pain you are living with could be neuropathic pain – and by telling your doctor he/she may be able to treat it.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR NEUROPATHIC PAIN:



Action on Pain

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IP25 7XA
Helpline: 0845 6031593 (local rate)
Email: aopisat@btinternet.com
www.action-on-pain.co.uk



BackCare – the Charity for Healthier Backs

16 Elmtree Road
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TW11 8ST
Helpline: 0845 130 2704
www.backcare.org.uk



Pain Concern

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Haddington
EH41 4YD
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Trigeminal Neuralgia Association UK
Facing pain together



Trigeminal Neuralgia Association UK

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06-00143a

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Date of preparation: May 2009

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