



Physical pain is never a pleasant experience, but under normal circumstances it has a purpose and an end. Its purpose is to alert you that there is some damage happening to your body, and its end is usually when the damage is successfully treated or healed.

However, in some cases pain goes on far beyond the normal recovery period for an illness or injury, or persists because the underlying condition cannot be easily healed. Or sometimes the original injury damages the nerve endings that generate pain signals, causing them to continue to send those signals for months or years on end.

Sometimes pain even occurs in the absence of any identifiable injury or cause. In all these cases, pain becomes detached from its original useful purpose, and becomes instead a problem in its own right.

This is what is known as chronic pain. It is a condition that afflicts some 86 million Americans, producing everything from continual low-level discomfort to continual disabling agony. Chronic pain also presents a major challenge to health professionals, as by its very nature it is a problem that will not go away, and all too often responds with only mixed success to current modes of treatment.

The Arthritis & Chronic Pain Research Institute is dedicated to helping to find solutions for those who suffer from chronic pain. We support biomedical research directed towards understanding chronic pain and its causes, so that pain sufferers can be free to live fuller and more enjoyable lives.