

PTSD and Chronic Pain

Pain is a sensation that hurts and is unique to each person. **Chronic pain** is pain that lasts longer than expected after a disease or injury. It can be ongoing or irregular and can range from mild to severe.

Unfortunately, some Veterans who suffer from chronic pain also have **PTSD**, an anxiety disorder that can occur after you have been through a traumatic event (for example: war, rape, a natural disaster, a car accident). Sometimes people who have been injured in a trauma develop both PTSD and pain, but some people who have experienced certain kinds of trauma and have PTSD are more likely to develop chronic pain.

Pain sensations can trigger PTSD symptoms and PTSD symptoms can make pain symptoms worse. **If you have both PTSD and pain, it is very important to tell your VA Healthcare Provider.** Getting treatment for PTSD symptoms may help reduce your pain or help you better manage your levels of pain. Treating pain can also help reduce the severity of PTSD.

Your VA Healthcare Provider can help you get treatment for PTSD and Chronic Pain!

Ask your VA Healthcare Provider about these treatments for **PTSD**:

- **Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE)**
- **Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)**

Ask your VA Healthcare Provider about these treatments for **chronic pain**:

- **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)**
- **Graded Exercise Therapy**