

# PTSD and Chronic Pain

Unfortunately, some Veterans who suffer from chronic pain also have [post-traumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#), an anxiety disorder that can occur after someone has been through a traumatic event (i.e., war, rape, a natural disaster, a car accident). Veterans who have been injured in a trauma can develop both PTSD and chronic pain as a result of the trauma and injuries related to the trauma. In addition, people who have experienced some types of trauma and develop PTSD more likely to develop chronic pain later in life.

For patients who suffer from both PTSD and chronic pain, pain sensations can trigger PTSD symptoms and PTSD symptoms can make pain symptoms, pain management, and pain-related disability more severe. ***If you are treating a Veteran with both PTSD and pain, it is very important to make a referral for evidence-based treatment for both pain management and PTSD.*** Referring Veterans to treatment for PTSD symptoms may help reduce their pain and can help them better manage their pain levels and symptom flares. In addition, referring Veterans to an evidence-based treatment for pain can also help reduce the severity of their PTSD symptoms.

Evidence-based treatments for [PTSD](#):

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

Evidence-based treatments for [chronic pain](#):

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