
I Have CRPS

- **I have Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), also known as Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome (RSD).**

- Physicians do not know why it develops or what causes it, but CRPS is a nerve disorder that usually occurs after a traumatic injury, surgery, sprain, fracture, or a period of immobilization. The principal symptom is pain dramatically disproportionate to the injury.

- In some individuals with CRPS, autoimmune antibodies that bind to autonomic and enteric neurons are present in the blood.

- CRPS can lead to disability.

- I may look "healthy," but I often suffer unbearable, unrelenting, and burning nerve pain. The McGill Pain Scale rates the pain of people with CRPS higher than that of people with cancer.

- My skin may swell, sweat, change colors, change temperature, or hurt to the slightest touch.

- CRPS can spread.

- Often it is difficult for me to sleep so I may have trouble with attention and concentration.

- I may be taking powerful medications prescribed by my physician with many side effects that may affect how I feel or how I react.

- It is often hard to move easily or keep my body steady.

- Chronic pain, like that caused by CRPS, often leads to depression because we undergo significant, and often negative, life changes.

- I have good and bad days; my pain may even change hourly. Stress increases my pain.

- Presently, there is no cure for CRPS. I always have hope because of the support of my family and friends and ongoing research.

Here's How You Can Help Me.

- My pain is real even though it is invisible and may not be readily apparent in my demeanor or activities.
- I am learning various coping mechanisms to get through the day, but the chronic pain is always there. I have good and bad days; my pain may even change hourly, and I cannot predict how I will feel each day.
- Sometimes it hurts to be touched anywhere so please ask before you touch me.
- It is OK to ask me about CRPS. Better yet, visit www.rsds.org and learn all you can.



Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association

99 Cherry Street, Milford, CT 06460 • Tel: (203) 877-3790 • www.rsds.org

RSDSA is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization. All donations are tax deductible.

