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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/complexregionalpainsyndrome.html>

## Complex Regional Pain Syndrome

Also called: Causalgia, CRPS, Reflex sympathetic dystrophy

Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) is a chronic pain [<https://medlineplus.gov/chronicpain.html>] condition. It causes intense pain, usually in the arms, hands, legs, or feet. It may happen after an injury, either to a nerve or to tissue in the affected area. Rest and time may only make it worse.

Symptoms in the affected area are:

- Dramatic changes in skin temperature, color, or texture
- Intense burning pain
- Extreme skin sensitivity
- Swelling and stiffness in affected joints
- Decreased ability to move the affected body part

The cause of CRPS is unknown. There is no specific diagnostic test. Your doctor will diagnose CRPS based on your signs and symptoms.

There is no cure. It can get worse over time, and may spread to other parts of the body. Occasionally the symptoms go away, either temporarily or for good. Treatment focuses on relieving the pain, and can include medicines, physical therapy, and nerve blocks.

*NIH: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke*

## Learn More

- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/complex-regional-pain-syndrome/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)  
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/sindrome-de-dolor-regional-complejo-es/?adfree=true>]
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/crps-complex-regional-pain-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20371151?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/crps-complex-regional-pain-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20371151?p=1>]
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/complex-regional-pain-syndrome>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.ninds.nih.gov/es/trastornos/sindrome-de-dolor-regional-complejo>]
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy) [<https://www.orthoinfo.org/en/diseases--conditions/complex-regional-pain-syndrome-reflex-sympathetic-dystrophy/>] (American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons)
- Signs and Symptoms of CRPS/RSD [<https://rsds.org/living-with-crps/signs-symptoms/>] (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association of America)

## Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Complex Regional Pain Syndromes [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Complex+Regional+Pain+Syndromes%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

## Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Intramuscular Botulinum Toxin for Complex Regional Pain Syndrome: A Narrative Review... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40711161>]
- Article: Complex regional pain syndrome and use of psychotropic drugs as a... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40640245>]
- Article: Cognitive Function in Patients With Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS). [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40626344>]
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Complex+Regional+Pain+Syndromes%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

## Patient Handouts

- Complex regional pain syndrome [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007184.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007184.htm>]
- Spinal cord stimulation [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007560.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007560.htm>]



## National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Complex Regional Pain Syndrome* is the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke [<http://www.ninds.nih.gov/>]

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