

Military/Veterans Pain Initiative



A growing number of military personnel and veterans, who are at heightened risk for injury and combat wounds, will face a life of chronic pain.

Early pain assessment and treatment is essential to avoid long-term problems and needless suffering.

The **American Pain Foundation (APF)** launched the **Military/Veterans Pain Initiative** to reach out to members of the military who are living with pain and their families to:

- **Provide** free educational materials and peer-to-peer support (e.g., resources, online chats, expert-led forums on such topics as amputations and pain, the culture of pain in the military, battlefield medicine);
- **Reduce** feelings of isolation;
- **Ensure** the unique needs of returning and retired soldiers are being addressed; and
- **Empower** those living with pain to seek appropriate pain care for themselves and other comrades.

Uncontrolled pain is a leading cause of disability and reduced quality of life. It adversely impacts every aspect of daily living, including work, sleep, and social relations.

Freedom from pain is your right. Take Action!

When pain is treated properly, many people can reclaim their lives with the dignity and respect they deserve.

“Toughing it out” by leaving pain untreated can lead to years of needless suffering, and can destroy lives and families.



American Pain Foundation
A United Voice of Hope and Power over Pain

An Urgent Need

Consider these facts...

- Veterans have **significantly worse pain** than the general public.
- Pain problems are among the most **common complaints** for all returning military, yet medical resources are limited.
- Veterans are more likely to experience psychological distress and other medical comorbidities, including post traumatic stress disorder, depression, amputations, traumatic brain injuries, substance abuse and other injuries, which further **complicates effective pain management**.
- Although today's body armor and rapid evacuation to medical care is saving lives, there are more maimed and shattered limbs than ever before, with **instances of amputation double previous rates**.
- While military medical care is the best in the world, **there are still long-term problems** with managing disability and chronic pain.
- Training to be stoic and fight through adversity is a **barrier to pain care**.
- **Families also suffer**, many struggling to cope with military separation and subsequent war-related stress and injuries.

“The intensity and life long implications of chronic pain among wounded soldiers is a major concern.”

*— Chester “Trip” Buckenmaier III, MD,
Walter Reed Army Medical Center*

Pain is not a sign of weakness; it is often an inevitable result of injury or trauma associated with the duty to serve one's country.

Get the Help You Deserve

For information and to get involved visit our web site, **www.painfoundation.org**. Click on the “Military/Veterans and Pain” button to talk online with peers, read stories, learn about specific pain conditions and treatments, advocate for yourself and access other helpful resources.