

Fact Sheet on Chronic Pain in the United States

The following statistics on pain are taken from the American Academy of Pain Medicine, and can be cited here: http://www.painmed.org/patientcenter/facts_on_pain.aspx

- Pain affects more Americans than diabetes, heart disease and cancer combined.
- In 2011, at least 100 million adult Americans have common chronic pain conditions, a conservative estimate because it does not include acute pain or children.
- More than one-quarter of Americans (26%) age 20 years and over—or, an estimated 76.5 million Americans—report that they have had a problem with pain of any sort that persisted for more than 24 hours in duration. NOTE: this number does not account for acute pain.
- Pain is a significant public health problem that costs society at least \$560-\$635 billion (in 2010 dollars) annually (an amount equal to about \$2,000 for everyone living in the United States). This figure combines the medical costs of pain care and the economic costs related to disability days and lost wages and productivity.
- Pain is associated with a wide range of injury and disease, and is sometimes the disease itself. Some conditions may have pain and associated symptoms arising from a discrete cause, such as postoperative pain or pain associated with a malignancy, or may be conditions in which pain constitutes the primary problem, such as neuropathic pains or headaches.
- Adults with low back pain are often in worse physical and mental health than people who do not have low back pain: 28% of adults with low back pain report limited activity due to a chronic condition, as compared to 10% of adults who do not have low back pain. Also, adults reporting low back pain were three times as likely to be in fair or poor health and more than four times as likely to experience serious psychological distress as people without low back pain.