

**INTRACTABLE PAIN SYNDROME (IPS)**

**2021 UPDATE**

*First of Four Parts*

**PART ONE: TRANSFORMATION AND DEFINITION**

Approximately one year ago we launched our IPS Research and Education Project to bring awareness, diagnosis, and treatments to persons who have this merciless condition. Much has been learned in this past year, and this four-part series is meant to update and establish a baseline for the disorder.

**TRANSFORMATION FROM SIMPLE CHRONIC PAIN TO IPS**

Our original impetus and investigation of chronic pain revealed that some rare patients transform from a state of periodic pain to constant (“never-ending -24/7”) pain. Once constant pain began, patients began to deteriorate, become reclusive, have a shortened life, or often commit suicide. To summarize: why and how the transformation occurred remained a mystery for many years.

**RECOGNITION OF COMPLICATIONS**

Beginning in the 1980’s persons who had transformed their chronic pain into severe, constant pain began to be called “intractable.” Some states even passed “Intractable Pain Laws” which fundamentally said that the pain was severe, “incurable by any known means”, and that doctors could symptomatically treat the patients with opioids and other controlled drugs. Amidst the opioid overdose and abuse crisis and the calls to restrict opioids has been the unnoticed research that has documented- that constant, “intractable” pain patients develop a specific set of clinical, serious complications that must be controlled. So specific are the complications that the term “syndrome” must be applied to call attention to the catastrophic medical disorder we now call “Intractable Pain Syndrome” or IPS, for short.

**DEFINITION**

IPS is simply defined as constant, incurable pain that has demonstratable cardiovascular, endocrine, and autoimmune complications.

**ROLE OF AUTOIMMUNITY**

A major research advance in the past year is the role of autoimmunity, which is the presence of antibodies in the blood that attack one’s own tissue. Autoimmunity is quite easy to identify in persons with IPS. It is so universal in IPS that we now believe that autoimmunity, plus excess electrostimulation from a disease or injury to be the root cause of transformation from simple chronic pain to IPS.

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