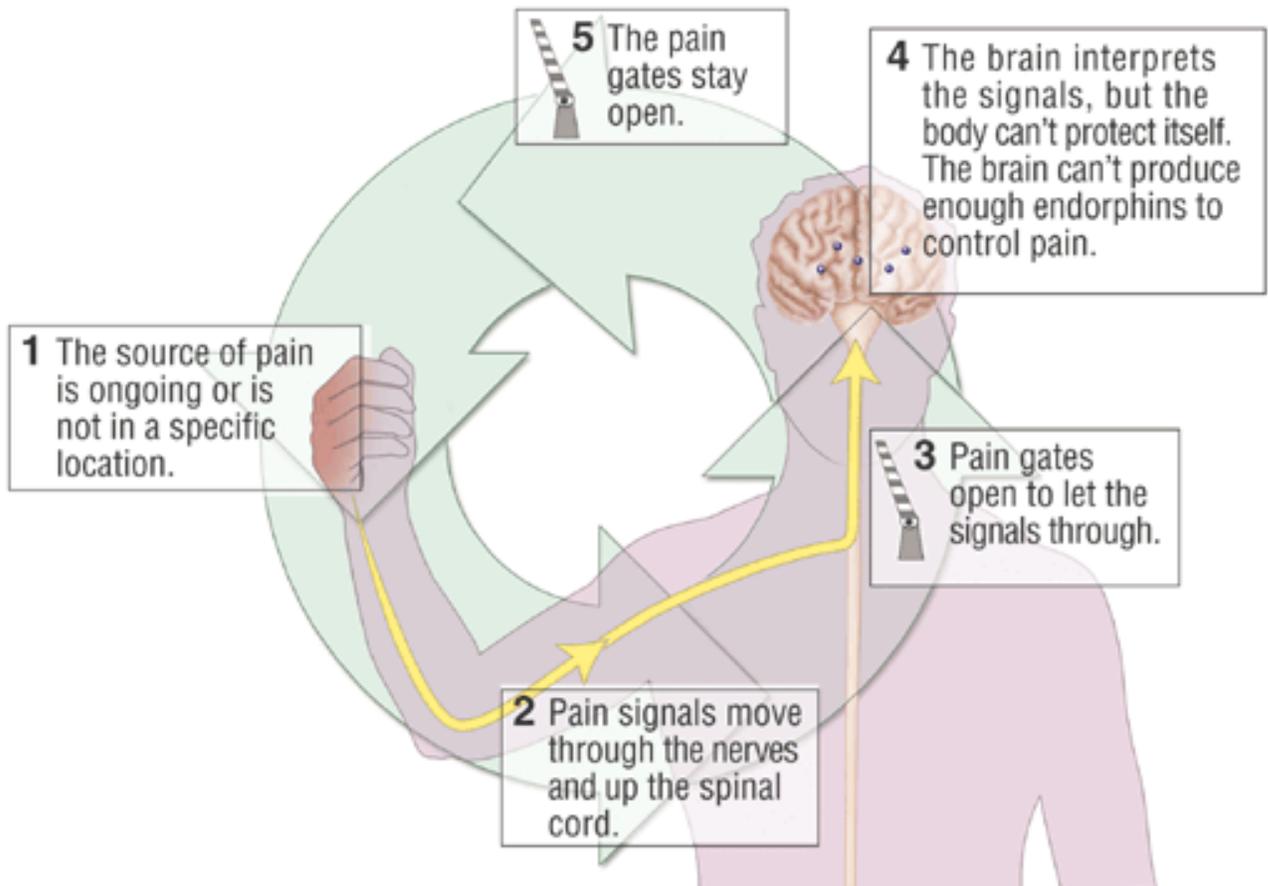


Chronic means ongoing. Pain is called Chronic when it lasts past the time of expected tissue healing, not necessarily a specific elapsed amount of time. Chronic pain may be due to **chronic stimulus** such as a bone spur or it may be due to a problem with the body's natural **pain control system**.



Chronic Stimulus

Chronic pain may be from a chronic stimulus. This means the cause of the pain is not cured or cannot be cured. The cause may be an untreated injury. Arthritis, headaches, and nervous system damage are all examples of conditions that commonly cause **chronic stimulus** type pain.

Chronic Pain Syndrome

Sometimes no cause can be found for the pain, or the cause was found and cured, but pain persists. This is **chronic pain syndrome** is the result of an improperly functioning **pain control system**. The brain can't make enough endorphins to combat the pain signals. Endorphins are the body's natural pain-fighting chemicals. In fact, the word comes from two words – Endo, meaning naturally occurring, and Morphine. In these cases even minor injuries can be very painful due to increased sensitivity.

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