



Phantom Pain



Overview

If you have lost a limb or another part of your body, you may feel painful sensations that seem to be coming from the missing part. This phenomenon is called "phantom pain." It is common among amputees. It can become a chronic problem for some people.

Causes

Phantom pain is believed to be linked to your brain and nervous system. When a piece of your body is removed, your brain no longer receives sensory signals from that area. Your confused brain may remap itself. It may begin to associate the missing part with another part of your body. This leads to painful sensations. Damaged nerves near the site of your amputation may also play a role in your pain.

Symptoms

Symptoms of phantom pain often begin shortly after your amputation. You may feel stabbing, burning sensations. You may feel as if the missing part is being squeezed. It may throb. You may feel like the missing part is being bent into a painful position. These sensations may come and go, or you may feel them all the time.

Treatment

Treatment options may include medications, nerve stimulation and other therapeutic techniques. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.

