

# Terminology of chronic pain published

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The *Journal of Pain Research* has published the commentary "Terminology of chronic pain: the need to "level the playing field".

As corresponding author Dr John F. Peppin says "Terminology matters, yet little attention has been paid to the terms we use to categorize and diagnose our [chronic pain patients](#). 'Chronic cancer [pain](#)' and 'chronic non-cancer pain' are replete in the literature; however, the distinction here is actually obscure. A patient with pain from a cancer etiology has no different physiology than a patient with pain of non-cancer etiologies. These terms are primarily philosophically based, rather than medical and physiologic. Pain mechanisms do not discriminate between cancer and non-cancer in pathophysiology. Therefore, we suggest that the terminology be changed to help us to better understand and treat all of our chronic pain patients who are suffering."

Dr Peppin continues "Perhaps a more prudent, less emotionally and philosophically charged set of terms would indicate the origin and generator of the pain, e.g., a patient with chest wall pain from radiation due to breast cancer would be labelled, 'Chronic pain of breast cancer radiation treatment origin'."

As Dr Richard Robinson, Associate Editor, explains "This article addresses a timely and controversial topic in a thoughtful, as well as thought provoking, manner."

**More information:** John Peppin et al. Terminology of chronic pain: the need to "level the playing field", *Journal of Pain Research* (2016).

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