



THE STORY OF THE DRAWING BY A CRPS SUFFERER

A 37-year-old female had a fall off a bicycle while touring in Europe on 7 April 2014. She was diagnosed with a twisted ankle and was encouraged to walk it better! Meanwhile, months later, X Rays revealed that she had multiple fractures of her talus bone.

She was directed to our practice 4 months later, in August 2014, still on crutches – the fractures had healed but she was diagnosed with CRPS. Her foot was hugely swollen, discolored - purple, red and blue, with a burning sensation in the sole and numbness on top of ankle and foot.

Her pain was constant - sharp, stabbing and aching and she had prickling, tingling, pins and needles, electric shocks, burning,

numbness, freezing cold and her leg and foot were very sensitive to touch.

She was treated intermittently for 2 years with non-interventional pain techniques (low and high frequency currents, non-invasive pulsed radiofrequency, acupuncture for stress and improvement of pain and mobility) and rehabilitation.

The beautiful drawing made by this patient provides an insight into the severe pain and disability that she suffered and how she viewed her discolored and hugely swollen leg on the treatment table, with acupuncture needles in her ears and foot. Why are there cats peeping into this picture? – this patient loved her cats and received much comfort from them, and this highlighted her coping mechanisms!

Complex regional pain syndrome when undiagnosed and NOT treated in the early stages can become a monster, sometimes for the remainder of the patient's life. This serves as a reminder of the potential consequences of undiagnosed and untreated CRPS, emphasizing the need for prompt intervention.

She is now well and has returned to her normal activities. There remain days when she feels some pain, but it is far more manageable!