

Differences Between Acute and Chronic Pain

Acute Pain

Serves a useful warning function that tells you something is wrong. This can be something simple, like a stubbed toe, or a warning about a symptom of underlying disease or injury

Ends after the injury heals or the disease runs its course

Chronic Pain

Pain that persists longer than 3 months

May be symptomatic of an underlying chronic disease or may exist in the absence of underlying disease

Persists long after the initial injury has healed

No longer serves as a useful warning function