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As a person who experiences chronic pain, I beg you not to release any more guidelines that hurt chronic pain patients. Before I went on opioids, my pain completely incapacitated me – I was unable to work, sleep (the pressure of my hands and feet on the bed was agonizing so I couldn't lie down for months on end, and only was able to get a little sleep here and there in a chair), and my whole life was consumed by pain. I attempted suicide not because I was depressed, but because I was in so much pain, and there was no relief, even for a moment.

There were so many hoops I had to jump through to get pain medicine. I suffered for years without it. But finally, I was able to get it.

Since then, I have gotten a job and can now sleep. I still struggle, but it's like night and day. Now, I have some kind of a life.

I once belonged to two chronic pain support groups online and I had to drop out because there was at least one suicide every week. It was always the same story – someone either lost access to their pain medicine or had them forcibly tapered until they no longer helped. People posted suicide notes, then friends and family would verify that they were dead. This was a weekly thing, and I finally had to leave the groups because it was too overwhelming for my mental health.

Untreated pain is a nightmare. People who need medication for pain aren't addicts. I have never, even once, taken more pills than I was supposed to. I have always taken my medication as prescribed. I am a patient, not an addict.

Don't punish pain!