

Causes

The exact cause of CRPS is not well understood, but it is often triggered by:

- **Trauma or Injury:** Including fractures, sprains, or surgery.
- **Nerve Damage:** Direct damage to nerves in the affected limb.
- **Infections:** Though less common, infections can also trigger CRPS.
- **Immune System Dysfunction:** An abnormal response of the immune system may play a role.

Symptoms

Symptoms of CRPS in the lower limbs can vary but typically include:

- **Severe Pain:** Often described as burning, stabbing, or throbbing, which is disproportionate to the initial injury.
- **Swelling:** Persistent swelling in the affected limb.
- **Skin Changes:** Changes in skin color (blotchy, pale, or red), temperature (hot or cold), and texture (shiny or thin).
- **Joint Stiffness:** Stiffness and difficulty moving the affected limb.
- **Changes in Hair and Nail Growth:** Either increased or decreased growth.
- **Muscle Weakness and Atrophy:** Decreased muscle strength and wasting away of muscles.
- **Abnormal Sweating:** Increased or decreased sweating in the affected limb.
- **Sensitivity:** Increased sensitivity to touch (allodynia) or to painful stimuli (hyperalgesia).

Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) is known by several other names, which can vary based on its historical classification and the specific characteristics of the condition. Here are the alternative names for CRPS:

1. **Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD):** This was the former name for CRPS Type I, which occurs without a confirmed nerve injury.
2. **Causalgia:** This term was historically used for CRPS Type II, which occurs with a confirmed nerve injury.
3. **Sudeck's Atrophy:** Named after Paul Sudeck, a German surgeon, it refers to the osteoporotic changes that can occur in the affected limb.
4. **Algo dystrophy:** Refers to the combination of pain (algo-) and dystrophy (trophic changes) seen in the condition.

5. **Shoulder-Hand Syndrome:** When the condition involves the shoulder and hand specifically.
6. **Reflex Neurovascular Dystrophy (RND):** Another term sometimes used, particularly in pediatric cases.
7. **Post-Traumatic Dystrophy:** Highlighting the onset of symptoms following an injury or trauma.

These terms reflect the complex nature and varied presentations of the syndrome. Over time, "Complex Regional Pain Syndrome" has become the preferred term in medical literature to encompass the broad spectrum of symptoms and underlying mechanisms.