



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stacey J. Miller
Telephone: 781/986-0732 or Email: sjmiller@bookpr.com

PRESS RELEASE

The Faces Behind Chronic Pain
What We Can Do About the Largest Invisible Epidemic in America

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH – Chronic pain affects 1 in 3 Americans and exerts more than a \$600-billion drain on the economy annually. It is the largest invisible epidemic we face. Having treated thousands of patients with chronic pain – often when they were at their most vulnerable – Lynn R. Webster, M.D., wants to improve the future for pain sufferers.

"The science of pain medicine is still in its infancy, if indeed it's that far along," says Dr. Webster, author of *The Painful Truth: What Chronic Pain Is Really Like and Why It Matters to Each of Us*. "Although 100 million Americans live with chronic pain, and literally no one can escape pain's effects, physicians, lawmakers, and even family and friends haven't been as understanding about pain as they could be. I want to change societal attitudes toward those in pain, and I want to ensure they do not ignore chronic pain sufferers."

In *The Painful Truth*, Dr. Webster introduces chronic pain through the eyes of his former patients, illustrating their unique situations as their lives were suddenly and dramatically torn apart by onset pain. "You can't ignore these people once you get to know their unforgettable

--continued--

10 Turning Mill Lane
TEL: 781-986-0732
sjmiller@bookpr.com

Randolph, MA 02368
FAX: 781-963-6883
www.bookpr.com

stories," Dr. Webster believes. These patients include:

- Jessy, a twelve-year-old girl from Page, Arizona who started to experience pain in her pelvic area while she was going through puberty. Her mother was her best advocate, and she took her to see a range of specialists from an OBGYN to a neurologist. Doctors hypothesized everything from appendicitis to abuse. Rumors persisted that Jessy had undergone an abortion, or given birth and put the baby up for adoption. At fifteen, because of both the physical and emotional pain, Jessy left her public school to be homeschooled. Her world was retracting because of an absence of support from her community.
- Carolyn Tuft's fifteen-year-old daughter, Kirsten Hinckley, died in her mother's arms when a shooter at the Trolley Square Mall in Salt Lake City, Utah, randomly selected victims. Carolyn watch as the young man shot her, taking off the back of her right shoulder and sending pellets deep into her chest, piercing her right lung and shearing the brachial nerves that extend from the neck to the arm. A police officer on the scene would later say that the hardest thing he ever had to do was pry Carolyn's hand from her dead daughter's hand. The shooter not only took away Carolyn's daughter, but he ended Carolyn's life as she had known it. The remainder of her life will be a daily struggle with pain.
- In the fall of 2001, a sophomore at Brigham Young University, Jason Bing watched the 9/11 devastation unfold on television and enlisted in the U.S. Army. He was assigned to the combat arm of infantry school which had the toughest training the Army dished out. In the second week of training, Jason injured himself twice and endured the pain instead of seeking treatment. Three years later, Jason fell once again, hurting his lower back. He had a knot on his spine and a lumber disk protrusion. This time, he could not ignore his pain, and doctors began prescribing muscle relaxants and a series of opioids including hydrocodone. After completing a tour of duty in Iraq, and he returned home. In addition to suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and addiction to pain medication, Jason lacked a support system. Left completely alone to manage his pain and depression, Jason's story is one of strength, resilience and bravery.

Through the portraits of Dr. Webster's patients, you will see what a pain experience is really like, and you'll see the patients move toward healing in the face of misunderstanding and societal barriers.

--continued--

"For those of us who are hoping to help others heal from pain," Dr. Webster concludes, "we need to first root out the vestiges of prejudice against pain that may linger inside us, then go on to counteract society's stigma against pain with the truth about this health condition."

The Painful Truth

What Chronic Pain Is Really Like and Why It Matters to Each of Us

By: Lynn R. Webster, M.D.

Oxford University Press

www.thepainfultruthbook.com

Format: Trade Paperback

ISBN: 978-0-19-065972-1

Retail Price: \$19.95 US

Publication Date: December 2016

Length: 216 pages

#

Author Bio: Dr. Lynn Webster

Dr. Lynn Webster has dedicated more than three decades to becoming an expert in the field of pain management. He is the vice president of Scientific Affairs of PRA Health Sciences and past president of the American Academy of Pain Medicine. A leading voice in trying to help physicians safely treat pain patients, Dr. Webster actively works within the industry to develop safer and more effective therapies for chronic pain and addiction. He is board certified in anesthesiology and pain medicine, and is also certified in addiction medicine. Dr. Webster lectures extensively on the subject of preventing opioid abuse and criminal diversion in chronic pain patients and has authored more than 300 scientific abstracts, manuscripts, journal articles and a book entitled *Avoiding Opioid Abuse While Managing Pain: A Guide for Practitioners*, many of which are the basis for training physicians who are studying pain.

Dr. Webster has played an instrumental role in his industry as a strong advocate for safe and effective pain resolution methods. The Opioid Risk Tool (ORT), which he developed, is currently used and is the standard in multiple countries and thousands of clinics worldwide. He spends most of his time now developing safer and more effective therapies for chronic pain and campaigning for safer use of medications.

He received his doctorate of medicine from the University of Nebraska and later completed his residency at the University of Utah Medical Center's Department of Anesthesiology. Dr. Webster has been quoted by multiple media sources, including in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and has given over 250 presentations across the United States and internationally. He is the author of *The Painful Truth: What Chronic Pain Is Really Like and Why It Matters to Each of Us* (Oxford University Press).

Suggested Interview Questions

1. What drew you to the field of pain management?
2. How prevalent is chronic pain in America?
3. Historically, how have physicians felt about their patients with chronic pain, and is that changing?
4. How does chronic pain affect people's lives?
5. Besides the pain itself, what are some of the challenges that patients face?
6. How might chronic pain arise in people who have been healthy their whole lives?
7. Does chronic pain have to put an end to a person's ability to thrive and lead a happy, worthwhile life?
8. As a doctor, do you always assume that people are telling you the truth about their chronic pain? Would they have any incentive to be dishonest about it?
9. What are opioids, and how can they benefit some patients?
10. What are the drawbacks of opioids, and what are some of the best alternatives?
11. How can family and friends help their loved ones with chronic pain?
12. For a physician whose specialty is pain management, what are the special challenges you've faced?
13. What do you hope will happen as a result of your research?
14. In the meantime, what can we do, as individuals, to improve the way people with chronic pain are treated?