



# FIGHTING FLAMES

The Official Newsletter of Fight the Flame®

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## IT'S ALMOST HERE

**Fight the Flame®**  
**CRPS Conference**  
**March 21, 2026 | Charlotte, NC**

Join us at our **Living with CRPS: Insights, Treatments & Healing** conference for a full-day centered on education, connection, and hope. Attendees will hear from medical experts, mental health professionals, and individuals with shared experience as they share insights on CRPS, emerging treatments, pain management, mobility solutions, and nervous system support. This event offers valuable information, time for questions, and the opportunity to connect with others who truly understand life with CRPS.

**2026 FIGHT THE FLAME CONFERENCE**

21 March, 2026  
8 AM - 5 PM

Courtyard by Marriott  
Charlotte Waverly  
6319 Providence Farm Lane  
Charlotte, NC

**LIVING WITH CRPS**

- Insights, treatments and healing
- A day of education, support and hope
- For CRPS patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals

**REGISTER NOW**

[FightTheFlame.org](http://FightTheFlame.org)

**OUTSTANDING SPEAKERS**

- Pradeep Chopra, MD**  
Center for Complex Conditions
- Chase Teagarden, PT, DPT, TP&E, CLT**  
The Window Pain
- Karan "Duff" Duffy**  
Pain Advocate
- Caryn Fidalgo, OTD, OTR/L**  
Green Light Mobility
- Amber Tolbert, CSW, LISW-CW**  
The Healing Collective
- Jonathan Leake, MD**  
Derive  
Ketamine treatments
- Aashish Jay Kumar, MD, D.ABA**  
Spine & Pain Specialists of the Carolinas

*You are not alone!*

## Important Conference Information

### 2026 CRPS Conference

Living with CRPS:  
Insights, Treatments & Healing



21  
**MARCH**  
8AM-5PM

**COURTYARD CHARLOTTE  
WAVERLY**

6319 Providence Farm Ln  
Charlotte, NC

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION**



Special Room Rates available.

Use link:

Fight the Flame March 2026

The day will include a light breakfast and lunch provided by Fight the Flame®, with scheduled breaks throughout to rest, stretch, and recharge. Attendees will have time to connect with fellow CRPS fighters, caregivers, and advocates, ask questions of speakers, and build meaningful connections in a supportive, understanding environment. The conference is thoughtfully planned with comfort, accessibility, and community in mind.

## CRPS & COLD WEATHER: WHY WINTER HURTS MORE AND WHAT CAN HELP

If you have noticed your CRPS symptoms getting worse as temperatures drop, you are not imagining it. Many people living with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome experience increased pain, stiffness, swelling, and fatigue during colder months. Winter can feel like an extra challenge layered on top of an already difficult condition. There is a real biological reason this happens and there ARE tools that can help.

### Why Does Cold Weather Make CRPS Worse?

When temperatures drop, blood vessels naturally narrow to preserve heat. This reduces circulation to the arms and legs and can increase nerve pain and stiffness. CRPS also affects the autonomic nervous system, making the body overreact to temperature changes. Sudden cold exposure may trigger sharp pain, burning sensations, swelling, and color changes in affected limbs.

### Barometric Pressure and Weather Fronts

Many people with CRPS notice pain flares before storms arrive. When barometric pressure drops, pressure on nerves and joints increases. This explains why pain may worsen even before rain or snow becomes visible.

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# CRPS & COLD WEATHER

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## Mental Health and Winter

Cold, dark days can affect mood and energy. Reduced sunlight may lower serotonin levels and contribute to seasonal depression, fatigue, and reduced motivation. Pain and mental health are closely connected, and both deserve care and compassion.

## Winter Survival Tips for CRPS Warrior

*Preparing for cold weather can reduce flare intensity and improve daily comfort.*

### Helpful Strategies

- Use heating pads, warm towels, hand warmers, or heated blankets for targeted warmth.
- Dress in soft layers and consider compression socks or gloves to support circulation.
- Take warm baths with Epsom salt to relax muscles and improve blood flow.
- Stay gently active with stretching or light movement to reduce stiffness.
- Stay hydrated and limit excess caffeine to support circulation.

### Build a Pain Flare Kit

- Heating pads or heat wraps
- Cozy blanket or throw
- Compression socks or gloves
- Easy meals and snacks
- Comfort items that calm your nervous system

## A Final Word From Fight the Flame®

Winter may feel like an enemy when you live with CRPS, but you are stronger than the season. Understanding why your body reacts the way it does brings validation. Preparing ahead gives you control. Connecting with others reminds you that you are not alone.

## CRPS Winter Quick Tips ❄️



### Use Heat Wisely

- Heating pads
- Warm towels
- Hand & toe warmers



### Dress Strategically

- Soft layers
- Compression socks/gloves
- Heated accessories



### Keep Blood Flow Moving

- Gentle stretching
- Light daily movement



### Warm Your Body

- Warm baths
- Cozy blankets



### Support Your System

- Hydrate
- Limit caffeine



### Build a Pain Flare Kit

- Heat packs
- Comfort items

**Fight the Flame®**  
[www.fighttheflame.org](http://www.fighttheflame.org)

# JANUARY 2026 FTF CRPS SUPPORT GROUP MEETING RECAP

## WHAT HELPS - EVEN A LITTLE

At our January support group meeting, we gathered to talk about something simple, but powerful: what helps, even a little. We did not come up with a magic cure for CRPS (if only!), but discovered some small things that make life just a little more livable.

We were thrilled to welcome a mix of longtime members and brand new faces to the Fight the Flame® community. What unfolded was an honest, uplifting conversation full of ideas, empathy, and encouragement.

*Some of the most helpful tips shared included:*

- Listening to music - especially songs that bring back good memories
- Talking to friends or family - sometimes just hearing a familiar voice makes a difference
- Spending time with pets - their love and comfort is unmatched
- Changing your scenery - even a short drive or walk somewhere new can reset your mood
- Letting yourself cry - because sometimes the healthiest thing is simply allowing yourself to feel.

**One powerful idea came from a member who shared that they no longer keep a "to-do list" -they now call it a "Goals & Target List." That small shift gives permission to try, rather than pressure to accomplish. It's a reminder that progress matters, not perfection.**

We also dove into ways to support our mental health:

- Seeing a therapist
- Journaling your thoughts and emotions
- Making time to socialize, even if it is just a quick chat

This meeting was a beautiful example of how much we can learn from one another. If you have ever felt alone in this fight, please know: you are not. There is a whole community here, walking (or rolling) beside you.

## Mission Statement

Fight the Flame® is dedicated to raising awareness, supporting research, and providing resources for individuals affected by CRPS.

**UPDATE**

# The Faces of CRPS Project

Volunteers will be reaching out to those of you who offered to be interviewed for our amazing project. Please respond to our volunteers in a timely matter.

Now that we have some of our interviews completed, we need to make them into short video, films, and reels. Can you help us with this?

**CALL OUT TO  
OUR CREATIVE  
FRIENDS:**

## NEXT CRPS SUPPORT GROUP MEETING



**FIGHT the FLAME**  
**FEBRUARY**  
**CRPS SUPPORT GROUP MEETING**  
Topic:  
**Hope through Dog Training**  
Guest Presenter:  
Sally Fowler  
Disabled Advantage  
February 14, 2026  
1 - 3 pm EST  
To RSVP and receive the meeting link, please email:  
[Beth@FightTheFlame.org](mailto:Beth@FightTheFlame.org)

## FOLLOW US

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*Wishing you a low pain day*

