

# How My Chronic Pain Revealed My Chronic Addiction

By [Maynard Colby](#)

For as long as I can remember, I was plagued with chronic urinary tract and kidney infections. Growing up in a small town, my mom and I would venture into the local family practitioner's office almost weekly. The doctor would write me a prescription for an antibiotic and send us on our way, without any answers. Essentially, we were treating the symptoms but never curing the ailment. Much like my addiction, I remember the pain eroding my quality of life. I'd spend hours crying, running into the bathroom, and begging for relief. One day I went for my routine office visit, and I was greeted by a fill-in doctor. Anxiously annoyed, I updated the doctor on my medical history. He quickly realized that my frequent visits warranted further investigation. Finally, someone validated my pain. Recommendations for a visit to a specialist resulted in a diagnosis: Interstitial Cystitis. A painful bladder disease proven to interrupt everyday activities with chronic pain and inconvenient side effects, IC became me. Then came the treatment. I remember the urologist writing me a prescription for Oxycodone and sending me home. No warning or further instruction was given, only a future appointment was scheduled for a follow-up.

My prescription would last the duration of the month until the symptoms seemed to persist. Looking back, I think this was a delusion that I reveled in. I didn't mind being the "sick girl." After all, who would argue for excusable days home from work, empathy from seemingly uninterested family members, and pity gifts from friends? I noticed I started taking my prescription as a preventative remedy for my pain and making sure to never miss an appointment with my specialist. This continued for a while until my mom passed away unexpectedly. The night my mom entered the hospital, I was out of my medicine and suddenly I was emotionally pained. My first thought was to call the local drug dealer, so I did. He met me with a bag full of oblivion and I indulged. *I had arrived.* Temporarily curing my [chronic physical and emotional pain](#), opiates came to the rescue. With the aid of my beloved opiates, I felt like a superwoman conquering the grueling task of comforting my family.

It wasn't long before chaos ensued. My addiction propelled my chronic pain and vice versa. I was stuck in a cycle that eventually led to my downfall. Visiting my specialist multiple times, a month, I vividly remember him telling me "Now don't get hooked on this sweetheart." It was too late. Our farewell always ended with me grinning ear to ear and prescription in hand. I had mastered the art of true manipulation, yet I was completely oblivious. As my addiction progressed, I always needed more, and I was enslaved to a disease I refused to acknowledge. Much like my undiagnosed IC, I was faced with untreated alcoholism. Uneducated and rebellious, I continued to numb grief until desperation found me. My life was completely unmanageable.

My consequences eventually led to a diagnosis I gratefully accepted. I was an addict, to the core of my being. In the same way, I sought out answers for my medical condition, I exhausted all seemingly redemptive solutions while seeking reprieve in any mood/mind-altering substance. It

wasn't until I welcomed treatment for the symptoms of my addiction that I was able to taste true freedom. Surprisingly enough, the symptoms of my bladder disease have subsided as well. [Healthy living](#) requires discipline but reaps immeasurable benefits. Mind, body, and soul... recovery is an all-encompassing gift that demands to be received.

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