What is Fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia is a syndrome that overall is characterized by diffuse pain and overwhelming fatigue that can be debilitating.

The cause of fibromyalgia is unknown.
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Fibromyalgia is a chronic inflammatory disorder, characterized by muscle pain, joint pain and fatigue. Patients who suffer from fibromyalgia usually feel these symptoms:

- Tenderness
- Stiffness
- Unbearable pain
- Chronic tiredness
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Sleep disorder problems
- Concentration problems
- Depression

Physicians will diagnose someone with fibromyalgia if they show positive reactions to 11 of 18 specific tender areas of the body. For a disease with no known cause, fibromyalgia sure affects a lot of people, at least 5 million in the U.S. alone. That’s about an estimated 2–4% of the population! Now, what’s strange about fibromyalgia is that it seems to affect more women than men, as 9 out of 10 people who reportedly suffer from fibromyalgia are female.
Regional Symptoms and Syndromes Related to Fibromyalgia

- Tension/migraine headache
- Affective disorders
- Temporomandibular joint disorder
- Esophageal dysmotility
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Interstitial cystitis, female urethral syndrome, vulvar vestibulitis, vulvodynia
- Constitutional
  - Weight fluctuations
  - Night sweats
  - Weakness
  - Sleep disturbances
- Cognitive difficulties
- ENT complaints (sicca sx., vasomotor rhinitis, accommodation problems)
- Vestibular complaints
- Multiple chemical sensitivity, "allergic" symptoms
- Neurally mediated hypotension, mitral valve prolapse
- Non-cardiac chest pain, dyspnea due to respiratory muscle motility dysfunction
- Nondermatomal paresthesias

Comorbid Symptoms and Syndromes

- Tension/migraine headache
- Affective disorders
- Temporomandibular joint disorder
- Idiopathic low back pain
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Nondermatomal paresthesias
- Fatigue, memory and cognitive difficulties
- Otolaryngologic complaints
- Multiple chemical sensitivity, "allergic" symptoms
- Esophageal dysmotility
- Neurally mediated hypotension, mitral valve prolapse
- Noncardiac chest pain, dyspnea
- Interstitial cystitis, female urethral syndrome, vulvar vestibulitis, vulvodynia

Conditions That Mimic Fibromyalgia
As mentioned, no simple blood test or X-ray can tell you if you have fibromyalgia. Because many medical conditions can cause pain in different areas of the body, your doctor may still want to do blood tests or X-rays to rule out illnesses that mimic fibromyalgia.

- Low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism)
- Vitamin D insufficiency
- Parathyroid disease (causing elevated blood calcium level)
- Muscle diseases causing muscle pain (such as polymyositis)
- Bone diseases causing bone pain (such as Paget's disease)
- Elevated blood calcium (hypercalcemia)
- Infectious diseases (such as hepatitis, Epstein Barr virus, AIDS)
- Cancer

The Typical Progression to the Diagnosis of Fibromyalgia

The Typical Progression to the Diagnosis of Fibromyalgia
Simple ligament laxity causes trigger points and chronic pain, but because it isn’t diagnosed and treated properly, the above scenario is all too frequent.
Treating Fibromyalgia with Conventional SYNthetic Drugs

Since the leading symptom of fibromyalgia seems to be muscle and body pain, scientists and doctors have tried to treat the symptoms with conventional drugs including NSAIDs (non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs), pain killers and antidepressants. However, these SYNthetic methods of treatment don’t seem to work very well. Is this a surprise to anyone????

First of all, most analgesics are very mild, and given the level of chronic pain that a majority of people experience, the results aren’t very effective at all. If you have fibromyalgia, chances are you’re suffering from all sorts of pains and aches, and taking multiple drug combinations can lead to serious side effects that can drastically interfere with how you live day-to-day life.

Furthermore, taking different combinations of drugs can result in a real problem, especially when you want to slow down or stop the medication. In many cases, some of these pain relievers can be quite addicting, and have some serious side effects!

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have approved several prescription drugs (Lyrica, Cymbalta, and Savella) for patients who are diagnosed with fibromyalgia. It’s a positive step in the right direction that the medical community is recognizing this disorder. However, I think that women who have symptoms of fibromyalgia need more than SYNthetic medication for their pain, especially because the first FDA reviewers of Lyrica (initially looked at to treat diabetic nerve pain) thought that its effects were not very impressive. In addition, Lyrica’s side effects include weight gain, swelling, dizziness, and drowsiness (the very symptoms that a fibromyalgia patient is trying to avoid!). Nature has the answers not SYNthetic Chemistry. Read the proof.

http://syntheticissinthetic4u.com

Having worked with fibromyalgia patients for years, it’s important to know that here is a better way to treat it without the use of drugs. I have helped many recover completely and others that are much better. Many must start by learning ways to nurture their body from the inside out. This condition is at a woman’s core, where there are many antecedent issues to look at. These may include sleep, nutrition, digestive problems, adrenal dysfunction, viruses (such as Lyme disease), other infections, and how you think and feel.
Causes and Remedies for Fibromyalgia

I believe there can be many contributing factors to fibromyalgia, including chronic inflammation, gluten intolerance, emotional and physical stress. If you really want to fix the problem, you must address the root cause. Many studies suggest that certain lifestyle changes can be enough to keep fibromyalgia at bay.

Conventional medicine has yet to uncover the cause of fibromyalgia and only offers management of symptoms through pain medications and antidepressants.

Functional medicine, on the other hand, looks to find the root cause of fibromyalgia and other chronic diseases, treating the problem at the root level to restore the patient to health. As a functional medicine physician, I've helped many patients recover from fibromyalgia. Below are the top ten root causes of fibromyalgia I see in my clinic.

1. Gluten intolerance

Gluten has been liked to more than 55 diseases and is often called the "big masquerader." The reason for this is that the majority of gluten intolerance symptoms are not digestive in nature, but are instead neurological, such as pain, cognitive impairment, sleep disturbances, behavioral issues, fatigue and depression.

2. Candida overgrowth

Candida is a fungus, or yeast, and a very small amount of it lives in your intestines. When overproduced, Candida breaks down the wall of the intestines and penetrates the bloodstream,
releasing toxic byproducts into your body and causing a host of unpleasant symptoms such as brain fog, fatigue, digestive issues and pain. Virtually every one of my patients with fibromyalgia has had Candida overgrowth.

3. Thyroid

It's vital that your doctor check all six blood markers to accurately measure your thyroid gland’s function. It’s also imperative that your doctor use the optimal levels rather than the standard reference range when assessing and diagnosing thyroid disorders. Getting my patient’s thyroid levels into an optimal range typically alleviates their fatigue, brain fog, sleep disturbances and depression.

4. Vitamin deficiencies

Magnesium, vitamin D and B12 deficiency are the most common vitamin deficiencies I see in those who have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia. I’ve had several patients completely reverse their fibromyalgia symptoms with magnesium alone. The best way to measure magnesium is a red blood cell (RBC) magnesium level, which can be tested through any conventional lab.

5. Small Intestine Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO) and Leaky gut

There are more bacteria in us and on us then there are of our own cells. When these bacteria get out of balance through use of antibiotics or a sugar-rich diet, we can lose our ability to digest and absorb nutrients, particularly B12. Gluten can cause SIBO and leaky gut and SIBO and leaky gut can lead gluten and other food intolerances. It’s a catch-22 and a vicious cycle. You must "fix the gut" first in anyone with fibromyalgia.
6. Mycotoxins

Mycotoxins are very toxic substances produced by molds. Conventional environmental mold testing only tests for levels of mold spores and does not test for mycotoxins. I use a urine mycotoxin test in my clinic to determine if someone has been exposed to toxic molds.

7. Mercury toxicity

I recommend that all my patients find a biological dentist and have their mercury amalgam fillings removed. Mercury is toxic to our bodies and can be one piece of the puzzle for those with...
fibromyalgia. I then recommend heavy metal testing using a pre- and post-DMPS urine challenge test.

8. Adrenal fatigue

Adrenal fatigue is a result of the chronic stress. Chronic pain is a stress to the adrenal glands, though it's typically not the initial adrenal stressor. The initial stressor is usually something such as food intolerances, Candida, mercury toxicity, vitamin deficiencies or mycotoxins. My goal is to support the adrenals with adaptogenic herbs while we search for the root cause of the stress and correct it. [http://www.downloads.imune.net/medicalbooks/978-615-5169-28-1%20Natural%20Remedies%20for%20Endocrine%20dysfunction.pdf](http://www.downloads.imune.net/medicalbooks/978-615-5169-28-1%20Natural%20Remedies%20for%20Endocrine%20dysfunction.pdf)

ADRENAL MASSAGE: A light massage of the adrenals can stimulate adrenalin by bringing blood flow to the adrenals

Slight rotation counter clockwise helps to stimulate adrenalin 2 to 5 min
do not use excess pressure
twice a day if necessary 5 hours in between
9. MTHFR mutations

This is a genetic test you can get though any conventional lab. The more mutations you have to the MTHFR gene the less able you are to methylate and detoxify toxins, such as mercury and lead. The more mutations you have at this gene the higher your requirements for methyl-B6, methyl-B12 and folinic acid in order to keep your detoxification pathways working properly.

Drugs to Avoid with MTHFR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Drugs to Avoid with MTHFR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antacids (deplete B12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholestyramine (deplete cobalamin and folate absorption) – common in gallbladder issues during pregnancy!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colestipol (decrease cobalamin and folate absorption)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methotrexate (inhibits DHFR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrous Oxide (inactivates MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niacin (depletes SAMe and limits pyridoxal kinase = active B6) → useful during times of over-methylation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theophylline (limits pyridoxal kinase = active B6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclosporin A (decreases renal function and increases Hcy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metformin (decreases cobalamin absorption)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenytoin (folate antagonist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbamazepine (folate antagonist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Contraceptives (deplete folate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antimalarials JFC-2056, Pyrimethamine, Proguanil (inhibits DHFR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antibiotic Trimethoprim (inhibits DHFR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethanol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacitracin (inhibits DHFR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulfasalazine (inhibits DHFR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triamterene (inhibits DHFR)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fischbach, Laboratory Diagnosis and BMI [http://heart.bmj.com/content/83/2/127.full.html](http://heart.bmj.com/content/83/2/127.full.html)

Which Supplements to use for MTHFR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Support Nutrients for MTHFR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L-Methylfolate (good forms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sublingual Methylcobalamin and/or Hydroxycobalamin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krill Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silymarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selenium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAC, MSM, SAMe, Methionine, Inositol, TMG, CoQ10, Alpha Lipoic Acid, L-Carnitine, Ribose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glutathione</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probiotics (strong – consider GAPS compliant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multivitamin with minerals and complete B’s (if patient can handle it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrolytes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptogens (Ashwagandha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digestive Repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://mthfr.net/l-methylfolate-methylfolate-5-mthf/2012/04/05/](http://mthfr.net/l-methylfolate-methylfolate-5-mthf/2012/04/05/)
10. Glutathione deficiency

Glutathione is the most critical part of our body’s detoxification system. Glutathione gets recycled in our body — unless our toxic burden gets too high, or we lack GSTM1 and GSTP1, the enzymes needed to recycle and produce glutathione. Taking glutathione or the precursors (NAC, alpha lipoic acid, milk thistle) often help dramatically with fatigue.

As you can see from the above list, many of these causes are interrelated, and often there's no single root cause of fibromyalgia. Because getting to the root can be complex, I recommend that you [find a functional medicine physician](#) in your area to help uncover the root cause for you. You don't need to suffer needlessly or mask your symptoms with pain medications and antidepressants. There are doctors likes myself who can help you!

If you're looking for natural remedies for fibromyalgia, consider the following:

1. **Eat Anti-inflammatory Nutrients**
Inflammation can cause a range of health problems, including muscle and joint pain. A German
study found that anti-inflammatory antioxidants like Quercetin (found in black and green teas, red onion, broccoli, tomato) can naturally reduce inflammation that can help fibromyalgia. Also, omega-3 fats can naturally reduce inflammation. If you’re going to purchase a fish oil, make sure you only buy a high-quality fish oil, high in antioxidants like astaxanthin and low in mercury. I personally take fish oil. Also, check out the Healing Food Shopping List for a complete list of anti-inflammatory foods that I recommend.

http://www.downloads.imune.net/medicalbooks/Natural%20Anti-inflammatories.pdf

2. Go Gluten-Free
One in seven people are gluten intolerant, and I’d even say that most people don’t do well with gluten. Gluten is a protein found in most grains like wheat. I’d start by eliminating all grains except for brown rice and quinoa. Gluten can lead to neurological problems, weight gain, inflammation, muscle pain and fatigue. I’ve helped many people go gluten-free and have seen some incredible results because of it. Most of my recipes in my healthy recipe section are gluten-free as well. I personally use Bob’s Red Mill Gluten-Free Flour for cooking that requires a flour.

IMUNE on Gluten  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2zxaeL4snM

3. Reduce Stress and Anxiety
A review in Neuroscientist found significant association between fibromyalgia and physical and sexual abuse in both adults and children. If you haven’t dealt with past issues in your life, I strongly encourage you to find a good counselor who can help you begin to heal emotionally. Another great place to start is by reading The Bondage Breaker by Neil Anderson. Also, schedule some fun and relaxation into your life! Stress can raise cortisol levels and inflammation markers which contribute to fibromyalgia symptoms.

4. Chiropractic Care
Research published in Best Practice and Research Clinical Rheumatology reports neck trauma
causing spinal, joint and muscular injuries increases the risk of developing fibromyalgia. Chiropractic care works to correct spinal misalignments and correct posture through spinal adjustments and rehabilitative spinal exercises. Also, patients with fibromyalgia have been shown to have hyperactivity of the sympathetic nervous system. Upper cervical spinal adjustments have been shown to have a positive effect by decreasing hyperactivity.

5. **Address Nutritional Deficiencies**

A study of 41 people with fibromyalgia found that taking five grams of D-Ribose (an organic compound) three times daily showed significant improvements in fibromyalgia symptoms. Also, studies have shown supplementing with magnesium can help with fibromyalgia symptoms and physicians recommend taking 250–300 milligrams twice daily. Some magnesium-rich foods include pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, cocoa, almonds, spinach, halibut and black beans.

Is someone in your family suffering from fibromyalgia? I’d love to hear your thoughts on fibromyalgia and conditions like chronic fatigue.

**Issues related to chronic pain**

There are a variety of underlying conditions that can lead to constant pain, chronic pain. These categories include nutrition, metabolism, infection, and toxic issues. Discuss these concerns with your healthcare provider.

- **Nutrition**
  - Low ferritin
  - Low B12
  - Low folic acid (blood)
  - Low 25-hydroxy vitamin D
  - Low vitamin C, B1, and B2

- **Metabolism**
  - Hypothyroidism (low thyroid)
  - Adrenal Dysfunction

- **Infection**
  - Lyme Disease or coinfections
  - Hepatitis C
  - Ova and parasites
  - Overgrowth of bacteria in the gut
  - Enteroviruses
  - Other infections not known or not yet understood

- **Toxic Issues**
  - Heavy metals
  - Pesticides
• Jet fuel
  Adapted from Gerwin, 2005.

Make your own
“Fibromyalgia Buster”
with essential oils

20 drops chamomile oil
20 drops lavender oil
20 drops wild orange oil
20 drops marjoram oil
fractionated coconut oil (FCO)

boost serotonin to knock out fibromyalgia
Causes of persistent myalgias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural/Postural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergonomic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious disease/Inflammatory disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunological/allergic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutritional disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hormonal disorders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Gerwin, 2005.

It is difficult to be certain of the actual cause of fibromyalgia. If we take a closer look at your nutrition, infections you have or had in the past, hormonal imbalance, metabolic challenges, and your emotional history we have a good place to start from. The chart above lists various causes that can lead to myalgias and then are linked to fibromyalgia. It’s important for you to understand as much as possible about this disorder, to help you and your practitioner create a good treatment plan.

Stress and hormones – are they connected?

You are probably already aware that hormones are vital to your healthy lifestyle. The hypothalamus (the master gland) sends biochemical messages to your thyroid gland, your adrenal glands, and your ovaries (among others) through your pituitary gland. This will regulate your metabolic balance, your immune system, your autonomic nervous system, and more. Then your body tissues send back chemical messages to the hypothalamus. The messages and information loops influence the symptoms that are seen in fibromyalgia. Let’s explore the three locations that the hypothalamus communicates with.

Research shows that fibromyalgia patients may have disruptions in hormonal sequences. Because the hypothalamus and pituitary gland are central in governing many hormonal cascades, an imbalance in one area could easily affect the other areas. Scientists trace some of these disruptions to environmental and genetic influences, and also psychological stress.

Adapted from A. Gupta and A. Simon, 2004
Thyroid gland. When your thyroid gland is not balanced, it can actually stem from an adrenal gland imbalance. Research shows a connection between thyroid conditions and fibromyalgia, which seems to happen more often in menopausal women. The symptoms in hypothyroidism (such as low body temperature, poor immune function, fatigue, and achiness) can add to the intense symptoms of fibromyalgia. When you treat your hypothyroidism, your symptoms of fibromyalgia can improve.

Adrenal glands. A major duty of your adrenal glands is to release cortisol. You have a daily cycle of cortisol, and you also release it under stress. Fibromyalgia patients report they have a feeling of “crashing” under stress (probably because of an adrenal imbalance). Research suggests that there might be a link between emotional trauma and disrupted cortisol rhythms in people who have fibromyalgia. When you heal your toxic emotions and support your adrenal health, your stress response will improve, in addition to your symptoms of fibromyalgia.

Ovaries. Women with fibromyalgia usually have more severe symptoms premenstrually and postmenstrually. This is because estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone can affect bodily pain and fatigue. So if you can balance your hormones with thyroid, adrenal, and ovarian support, you can lessen the fibromyalgia symptoms. Remember that your fibromyalgia tends to improve as you age and your symptoms will decrease as you develop coping strategies.

Central sensitization theory and fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia patients seem to feel more intense pain, and though it’s not understood why, there is some research that helps explain why. Scientists think that it begins in the deep tissues of the muscles and joints with a tightening of muscles, which leads to poor sleep. Without proper rest, the muscles can’t recover, and this can lead to continuous signals between your muscles and your central nervous system. Then this alters the way that your central nervous system processes outside conditions. You will feel more pain and be more sensitive. This is known as central sensitization.

An interesting thing about central sensitization is that the causes and effects of fibromyalgia are thought to be bidirectional. This means that structural imbalances can cause your muscles to tighten, while tight muscles can lead to structural imbalances. In addition, poor sleep can lead to your muscles tightening, and tight muscles can lead to poor sleep. You get the idea and can see the vicious cycle, right?

How can you stop this cycle? Two basic steps are to be sure to get good rest and be sure to get good nutrition (for the best functioning of your muscles). There are other ways to decrease your pain naturally. You might even be able to eliminate it.
Some key nutrients that are helpful for fibromyalgia

- B-complex vitamins for energy, immunity, nerve, and brain function
- Magnesium for muscle energy
- Selenium for the best immune function
- Vitamin C for oxidative stress
- Fatty acids, such as omega-3 to help promote cell membranes and mood
- Vitamin D for mood, immunity, and the musculoskeletal system
- Zinc for cell health
- Iodine for thyroid health
Emotions. I’ve discovered a lot of important aspects about our bodies, throughout my years of working with patients. One of the most interesting is that for each emotion we feel (both the positive and the negative) there is a biochemical signature that occurs in our bodies. To put this in clearer terms, it means that if we hide our emotions and don’t adequately express them, then eventually the emotional issues display in physical ways. There was a 1990s study done (Adverse Childhood Event Study) that found specific evidence about how negative experiences influence health. Adults can hold onto childhood memories and resort to previous behaviors that worked then. Of course, those behaviors don’t usually work for adults. If a grown person continues to engage in child-like emotions, then he or she cannot resolve core issues. I have found that my fibromyalgia patients tend to be critical and judgmental of themselves. If they can learn to forgive and love themselves, then healing can more easily happen. There are several alternatives to help deal with emotions, such as Emotional Freedom Techniques, the Quadrinity Process, and cognitive behavioral therapy. I’ve worked with women who were willing to look at their emotional issues and develop new coping strategies and that helped improve their fibromyalgia symptoms.

Manual Lymph Drainage Therapy

A type of massage called manual lymph drainage therapy (MLDT) helps move lymph fluid through the body. The lymph system helps rid the body of waste and toxins, but relies on muscle movement to remain efficient. Rhythmic movements can help stimulate blood flow, potentially loosening up lymph blockages that may be causing pain.

A 2009 study tested this therapy on one group of women diagnosed with fibromyalgia. The women received treatment five times a week for three weeks. Results showed that MLDT was more effective than regular massage at reducing morning tiredness and anxiety. Both therapies improved pain and quality of life.

Tai Chi

Tai chi is an ancient Chinese physical practice that involves moving the body slowly and gently. It has shown some potential in helping to ease fibromyalgia symptoms.

In a 2010 study, participants took part in a 60-minute tai chi class or a 60-minute wellness education and stretching class. They attended these classes twice a week for 12 weeks. Those who did tai chi experienced improvements in pain, sleep quality, depression, and quality of life. The benefits were still noticeable 24 weeks later.
Acupuncture

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese treatment that uses very thin needles to ease pain and treat various conditions.

A 2006 study split fibromyalgia patients into two groups. Members of the first group received acupuncture treatments. Members in the second group did not. Those who used acupuncture experienced improved fatigue and anxiety.

A more recent 2013 meta-analysis found similar results. Researchers examined data from nine trials with a total of 395 participants. They concluded that there was some evidence acupuncture may improve pain and stiffness.

SAMe

The NYU Langone Medical Center notes that SAMe may also work like 5-HTP does. This compound is made naturally in the body, and is believed to have many health benefits.

Four double-blind trials studied this supplement, and three of those found it to be helpful for patients. In one, 44 people took 800 mg of SAMe or a placebo for six weeks. Those taking SAMe experienced improved rest, fatigue, morning stiffness, and mood.

5-HTP

5-HTP is a natural amino acid. It helps make serotonin, the feel-good neurotransmitter in the brain.

According to the University of Maryland Medical Center, three studies have suggested 5-HTP may help improve fibromyalgia symptoms like pain, anxiety, fatigue, and morning stiffness.

Scientists believe 5-HTP works similarly to an anti-depressant. It helps raise levels of serotonin, balancing abnormal brain function.
Meditation

Can meditation change the way the brain processes pain signals? Australian rheumatologist Dr. Daniel Lewis thinks so, and he also suggests that it may change the way the brain functions, improving symptoms.

A 2012 analysis of studies reported that meditation provided pain relief. Researchers believe it helps calm the mind and ease the body, promoting deep rest and relaxation, which help the body heal itself.


The impact of a meditation-based stress reduction program on fibromyalgia.

Kaplan KH, Goldenberg DL, Galvin-Nadeau M.

Arthritis-Fibromyalgia Center, Newton Wellesley Hospital, Massachusetts.

Fibromyalgia is a chronic illness characterized by widespread pain, fatigue, sleep disturbance, and resistance to treatment. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a meditation-based stress reduction program on fibromyalgia. Seventy-seven patients meeting the 1990 criteria of the American College of Rheumatology for fibromyalgia took part in a 10-week group outpatient program. Therapists followed a carefully defined treatment approach and met weekly to further promote uniformity. Patients were evaluated before and after the program. Initial evaluation included a psychiatric structured clinical interview (SCID). Outcome measures included visual analog scales to measure global well-being, pain, sleep, fatigue, and feeling refreshed in the morning. Patients also completed a medical symptom checklist, SCL-90-R, Coping Strategies Questionnaire, Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire, and the Fibromyalgia Attitude Index. Although the mean scores of all the patients completing the program showed improvement, 51% showed moderate to marked improvement and only they were counted as "responders." These preliminary findings suggest that a meditation-based stress reduction program is effective for patients with fibromyalgia.

Publication Types:

- Clinical Trial
- Randomized Controlled Trial

PMID: 8307341 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
Yoga

Several studies show that a regular yoga practice may help ease the symptoms of fibromyalgia. For example, researchers at Oregon Health & Science University reported that yoga exercises reduced fibromyalgia pain. A 2011 study found that patients who took a 75-minute yoga class twice weekly for eight weeks experienced less pain. They also had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol in their blood.
Tadasana  Vrksasana  Utthita Trikonasana  Utthita Parsvakonasana  Virabhadrasana II  Prasarita Padottanasana

Uttanasana  Adho Mukha Svanasana  Baddha Konasana  Virasana  Dandasana  Janusirsasana

Paschimottanasana  Upavista Konasana  Bharadvajasana  Setubandha Sarvangasana  Viparita Karani  Savasana

crunch is good for toast, not yoga. tuck your chin to elongate your neck.

channel your inner balloon: inhale deep into the space in your belly & chest.

stack 'em bones, keep your knees over your ankles to prevent strain & add stability.

push your tush up to the ceiling for power & low back support.
Yoga Poses for the Most Common Aches and Pains

A Basic How-To For Healing Yoga Poses

Research shows regular yoga practice can effectively reduce chronic pain — addressing both physical aspects and emotional.[1] Even in the short term, studies suggest practicing yoga can help treat pain-related conditions including back pain, arthritis, and migraines. While completing a yoga practice of more than one pose will likely provide added pain-reducing benefit — including a possible reduction in the stress and anxiety that often comes with acute pain — the following poses are a great start for some of the most common aches.
Ailment: Headache
Pose: Child’s Pose (Balasana)

While many poses are known to reduce the tension that causes headaches before they happen, this pose is great when the ache has already sprung. Child’s pose just slightly inverts the body for increased blood circulation to the head, helping to relieve tension.

How to: Kneel on the floor, big toes touching, knees at hip-width. Exhale and gently lower the torso between the thighs, resting the forehead to the mat. Rest the arms to the sides of the body (palms up), or extend them in front of the body (palms down) for a great shoulder opener. Rest in this pose for 30 seconds to a few minutes, gently “melting” into the floor with each breath.
Ailment: Upper Back Pain
Pose: Cat-Cow (Marjariasana)

This pose is commonly used at the start of a practice to stretch and gently massage the back and neck muscles. Arching up and down helps relieve tension and increase mobility in the spine.[2] Cat-Cow also helps prepare the spine for more advanced back bends.

How to: Start in a tabletop position with the hands and knees on the floor, the spine neutral. On an inhale, press through the hands to round the spine and gently drop the head for cat pose. Really arch the upper back, lowering chin to chest and gaze toward the bellybutton, for a full stretch. On the exhale, lift the chest, gaze upward, and allow the upper spine to slightly release downward (the
tailbone should tip up toward the ceiling) for cow pose. Repeat four to six times, transitioning with each breath.

Ailment: Lower Back Pain
Pose: Legs up the Wall (Viparita Karani)

This relaxing and restorative inversion is a great way to end a long day (especially for those who are on their feet all day). Resting the extended legs on a wall gently stretches the hamstrings, relieving pressure in the lower back.

How to: Start in a seated position next to a wall, the feet on the floor in front of you, left side of the body making contact with the wall. Gently lie down on the back then pivot at the hips until the backs of the legs are pressing against the wall, perpendicular to the floor. The legs should be as straight as
is comfortable, but if the full extension isn’t there just yet, start with a little bend in the knees. Scoot the body as close to the wall as possible (the bottom can make contact). Soften the upper body and allow yourself to sink the weight of the legs into the wall, hands may rest on the belly. Stay in the position for 2-15 minutes, and gently roll to one side before returning to standing. Note: Some people feel more comfortable in this pose with a prop, like a pillow, bolster, or block, underneath the low back and buttocks.

Ailment: Wrist Pain
Pose: Upward Bound Fingers (Urdhva Baddhanguiyasana)

A 9-5 office job can do a number on the body, especially the wrists with continuous keyboard and mouse use. Practice this one at home or on the job to maintain flexibility in the wrists.
**How to:** This pose can be practiced seated or standing. Inhale and raise the arms straight in front of the body (perpendicular with the torso). Bend the wrists and interlock the fingers, the thumbs touching one another. Exhale and roll the palms away from the body, keeping the fingers interlocked. If fully extended arms create any discomfort, breathe into the pose while slowly straightening the arms. With another exhale, bring the arms (fingers still bound) overhead so the palms are parallel with the ceiling. Hold the pose for 30 seconds to a few minutes, or with each breath, alternate extending the arms in front of the body and above the body (hands bound throughout).
This full body energizer stretches everything from the calves and hamstrings to the back, shoulders, and forearms. You will see downward dog in many styles of yoga, as it is part of the traditional sun salutation sequence.[3]

**How to:** Start in a tabletop position with the hands shoulder width apart and knees on the floor, the spine neutral. Extend through the arms, lift the knees off the floor, exhale, and press the pelvis toward the ceiling. Gently pedal through each leg — slightly straightening one, bending the other. Press the upper body up and away from the hands throughout the pose, gradually releasing through the upper back. Think about pulling the shoulder blades away from the ears to open through the shoulders and rotating the elbows slightly inward rather than bowing out. Slightly relax the head and neck and gaze toward the navel.
**Ailment: Hip Pain**  
**Pose: Happy Baby (Ananda Balasana)**

While it may feel a little silly at first, this calming pose does wonders for the lower back and hips. Great for the end of a practice or even before bed, this pose requires little effort compared to many standing hip-openers.

**How to:** Lie on the back. On an exhale, bend the knees to the sides of the body. Inhale then grip the outside edges of the feet (elbows inside of the knees). If holding onto the feet directly is uncomfortable, place a strap on each foot to add length. Gently pull the knees down and toward the armpits. Flex the feet and keep the heels stacked over the knees (the lower half of each leg should be fairly perpendicular to the rest of the body). Hold the pose for 30 seconds to a few minutes. Feel free to add some creativity by rocking side to side while bringing the thighs toward the floor.
Ailment: Knee Pain
Pose: Warrior I (Virabhadrasana I)

While certain yoga poses — such as those in the warrior sequence, for instance — help strengthen the muscles around the knee joint (protecting it from future injury), they may also cause discomfort for those experiencing knee pain. [4] But with the proper form and a multitude of modifications, standing poses can still be incorporated into a practice to work up that strength.

How to: Begin at the top of the mat. Step the left foot back (about four to five feet behind you). The front foot should point straight ahead, parallel to the mat; the back foot should point to the left corner of the mat, slightly diagonal. Think about dropping the tailbone toward the mat, lowering into the front, bent leg. Scoop the pelvis so the torso becomes more perpendicular placement compared to the mat. On an exhalation, raise the arms overhead. Remember to engage the thigh muscles of both legs and make sure the front knee is above the ankle (try not to let it track forward, backward, inward, or outward) to prevent knee pain.

Ailment: Digestion Pain
Pose: Wind-Relieving Pose (Pawanmuktasana)

As it's name suggests, this pose helps release abdominal gas, which can cause sharp pain and discomfort. Curling the body into a tight ball helps massage the intestines and aid in digestion.[5]
**How to:** Lie on the back, feet together, arms to the side. With an exhale, bring the right knee toward the chest, gently pulling it toward the body. Inhale and with the next exhale touch the knee to the forehead (if the body doesn't allow the head and knee to make contact, just work toward pressing the leg gently in toward the belly). Take a few deep breaths in this position. Return to start then repeat the movement with the other leg then with both legs together.

*With any yoga pose, it’s important to work within your own range of limits and abilities. If you have any known medical conditions, have a conversation with your doctor before practicing yoga.*

[4] https://yogainternational.com/article/view/yoga-therapy-for-your-knees1


**References:**


Eductor Pain Panel

Temperature
- Heat improves
- Cold improves

Touch Massage
- No touch improves
- Touch improves

Movement
- No motion improves
- Motion improves

Ph
- Acid improves
- Alkaline improves

Pain is God's gift, as it is the sign of the deeper disease. Pain is the messenger of what is wrong in the body mind spirit. Shooting the messenger is not healthy. Listen to the pain, talk to it end deal with it naturally.

Pain locations:

- constant pain
- abdominal pain
- Episodic pain
- upper abdomen
- spasm pain
- lower abdomen
- Specific pain area
- fire type
- unspecific pain area
- cramping like
- stabbing pain
- Pain from injury
- Dull ache
- swelling at point of pain
- low back
- psych pain
- Stinging pain

Angina
- Chest pain
- worse on finger pressure
- worse on exposure to cold air
- worse on exerion
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Spinal injury and pain

Using MTENS, and TVEP the SCIO can treat the spinal area for injury and pain. Sending in an auto-focused sophisticated pulse different for each patient based on their personal electrical needs.
### 6 FOODS THAT FIGHT PAIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>Benefits and Usage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cherries</strong></td>
<td>Cherry extract is ten times more effective than aspirin at relieving inflammation. Only two tablespoons of the concentrated juice need to be taken daily for effective results. Sweet cherries have also been found to be effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Celery and Celery Seeds</strong></td>
<td>There are more than 20 anti-inflammatory compounds in celery and celery seeds, including a substance called apigenin, which is powerful in its anti-inflammatory action. Add celery seeds to soups, stews or as a salt substitute in many recipes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ginger</strong></td>
<td>Ginger reduces pain-causing prostaglandin levels in the body and has been widely used in India to treat pain and inflammation. A study by Indian researchers found that when people who were suffering from muscular pain were given ginger, they all experienced improvement. The recommended dosage of ginger is between 500 and 1,000 milligrams per day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turmeric</strong></td>
<td>Turmeric (<em>Curcuma longa</em>) is the yellow spice commonly used in Indian curries. In research it has been shown to be a more effective anti-inflammatory than steroid medications when dealing with acute inflammation. Its main therapeutic ingredient is curcumin. Research shows that curcumin suppresses pain through a similar mechanism as drugs like COX-1 and COX-2 inhibitors (without the harmful side effects).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flax Seeds and Flax Oil</strong></td>
<td>Freshly-ground flax seeds and cold-pressed flax oil, contain plentiful amounts of fatty acids known as Omega-3s. Do not cook with flax oil otherwise it will have the opposite effect-irritating the body’s tissues and causing pain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Raw Walnuts and Walnut Oil</strong></td>
<td>Raw walnuts and walnut oil also contain the same powerful Omega-3 fatty acids that fight pain and inflammation in the body.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### HABITS TO AVOID FOR FACIAL PAIN PATIENTS

- Yawning widely, testing the joint, or "playing with" your jaw.
- Chewing gum or tough, crunchy or hard foods.
- Resting your chin and/or cheek in the palm of your hand when sitting or lying on one side.
- Eating, reading or watching television in bed.
- Clenching your teeth - when tense, jogging, etc.
- Licking your teeth with your tongue.
- Closing your lips to hide braces, a splint, malocclusion, missing teeth, etc.
- Biting your nails.
- Biting or licking your lips.
- Biting or sucking your cheeks.
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Cranial electrotherapy stimulation and fibromyalgia

Marshall F Gitula

Cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES) is a well-documented neuroelectrical modality that has been proven effective in some good studies of fibromyalgia (FM) patients. CES is no panacea but, for some FM patients, the modality can be valuable. This article discusses aspects of both CES and FM and how they relate to the individual with the condition. FM frequently has many comorbidities such as anxiety, depression, insomnia and a great variety of different rheumatologic and neurological symptoms that often resemble multiple sclerosis, dysautonomias, chronic fatigue syndrome and others. However, despite long-standing criteria from the American College of Rheumatology for FM, some physicians believe there is probably no single homogeneous condition that can be labeled as FM. Whether it is a disease, a syndrome or something else, sufferers feel like they are living one disaster after another. Active self-involvement in care usually enhances the therapeutic results of various treatments and also improves the patient’s sense of being in control of the condition. D-ribose supplementation may prove to significantly enhance energy, sleep, mental clarity, pain control and well-being in FM patients. A form of evoked potential biofeedback, the EPFX, is a powerful stress reduction technique which assesses the chief stressors and risk factors for illness that can impede the FM patient’s built-in healing abilities. Future healthcare will likely expand the diagnostic criteria of FM and/or illuminate a group of related conditions and the ways in which the conditions relate to each other. Future medicine for FM and related conditions may increasingly involve multimodality treatment that features CES as one significant part of the therapeutic regimen. Future medicine may also include CES as an invaluable, cost-effective add-on to many facets of clinical pharmacology and medical therapeutics.


Cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES) with Alpha-Stim® is a well-documented neuroelectrical modality that has been proven effective in some good studies of fibromyalgia (FM) patients (Figures 1 & 2). This article discusses aspects of both CES and FM and how they relate to the individual with the condition. CES is the US FDA and EU-recognized generic category for medical devices using microwatt levels of electrical stimulation applied across the head via transcutaneous electrodes for the treatment of anxiety, insomnia and depression. Microwatt (<1000 µA) stimulation usually means 1 mA or less, whereas transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) involves higher currents in the 90-100 mA range and with very different waveforms. CES treatment of anxiety and depression began in the USA in the early 1960s, and is still being prescribed routinely by several hundreds of physicians today but has yet to achieve ubiquitous acceptance in medical practice. This is possibly because sufficient information has not been made available to practitioners regarding the safety and efficacy of CES as a treatment for the approved indications of anxiety, insomnia and depression. Using an electromedical device requires more of an additional learning curve for both practitioners and patients who are accustomed to the pharmaceutical model of intervention. Ingesting a capsule or a tablet does not always require the attention to detail that correct application of ear clip electrodes, for example, demands. We have been conditioned


http://www.downloads.imune.net/medicalbooks/Natural%20therapy%20for%20Cystic%20Fibrosis.pdf
7 Super Foods That Silence Pain

Olive Oil

Wild Alaskan Salmon

Almonds

Carrots

Jalapeno Peppers

Broccoli

Spinach

Additional Pain Fighting Foods Include...

Nuts and Flax Seeds

Ginger

Spinach

Blueberries

Coconut

Cherries

Water

Honey

Garlic

For More Great Tips Like This, FREE Resources and Natural Pain Relief Products Visit:

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What is Pain?

Pain is your body’s way of telling you that something is wrong, hurts like a fever. Just like a fever, most people simply react to pain without dealing with the underlying cause of the problem.

In addition to dealing with the underlying cause, it’s important that you also work with the inflammation, as this reduces people who suffer from various acute and chronic pain as arthritis, back pain, headaches, and others to use various internal remedies.

10 Foods That Fight Fibromyalgia Pain

1. Nuts and Flax Seeds
2. Spinach
3. Blueberries
4. Coconut
5. Honey
6. Ginger
7. Cherries
8. Water
9. Hot Peppers
10. Garlic

Hope you like these because adding some lean meat to your diet can increase your back’s ability for peak performance.
Cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES): A safe and effective low cost means of anxiety control in a dental practice

Reducing patient anxiety always has been a concern in the practice of dentistry. Today, dentists have a variety of modalities available to reduce patients' anxiety. Typical examples include medication, electronic anesthesia, acupuncture, hypnosis, air-abrasion dental handpieces, and nitrous oxide. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Concerning disadvantages, some are too expensive, some are too time-consuming, and some have a long learning curve. Others are limited by patients' medical conditions, or have lingering side effects after treatment.

A popular dental anxiolytic is nitrous oxide, a gas of low anesthetic potency that is incapable of inducing deep levels of anesthesia if an adequate oxygen concentration is maintained. Nitrous oxide induces a state of behavioral disinhibition, analgesia, and euphoria. Physicians and dentists have long considered nitrous oxide to be a safe pharmacological agent. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that its excessive or prolonged use can damage the bone marrow and nervous system by interfering with the action of vitamin B₁₂.

There have been reports of immunological and reproductive disturbances in health care professionals who are chronically exposed to nitrous oxide. An elevated risk of spontaneous abortion has been seen among women who worked with nitrous oxide for three or more hours per week in offices not using scavenging equipment (relative risk = 2.6, 95 percent confidence interval 1.3-5.0 adjusted for age, smoking, and number of amalgams prepared per week), but not among those using nitrous oxide in offices with scavenging equipment.

It has been known for some time that electrical stimulation affects physiological changes. In the 1860s dentists reported excellent results using crude electrical devices for pain control. By the turn of this century, electrical devices were in widespread use to manage pain and to cure everything from cancer to impotence. The unrefined early electrical technologies and financial strength of the young pharmaceutical industry caused this form of therapy to fall into disrepute in the medical and dental professions. This left chemistry the "master science" and, as such, fully responsible for treating all of mankind's ills.

Now that we are approaching the turn of another century, armed with a new foundation of scientific data about the potential role of biophysics, scientists and practitioners are reexaming the use of electromedical modalities.

One of the results is that over the past 30 years, transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation has become widely accepted by physicians and dentists as a means to control many forms of pain. Alpha-Stim (Electromedical Products International Inc., Mineral Wells, TX) cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES) technology appears to offer an easy to use, safe, and cost-effective treatment to reduce situational anxiety. Stanley et al. showed that CES...
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- Take dried lentils (150 grams / 5 oz) and soak for 12 hours.
- In a large pot add finely chopped onion, carrot, celery and garlic. Add bay leaf and seasoning.
- When the onion is cooked, add 5 chopped tomatoes and a glass of red wine.
- When the tomato becomes a sauce, add the lentils.
- Cook the lentils until soft, now your lentils are ready!
- You can also add other vegetables like roasted pumpkin, squash, sweet potato, egg plant or roasted celeriac.
- Sprinkle with fresh parsley. Serve on their own, or with a fish or meat dish.
Qualitative systemic review of randomized controlled trials on complementary and alternative medicine treatments in fibromyalgia

Julia Baranowsky · Petra Klose · Franko Musial · Winfried Haeuser · Gustav Dobos · Jost Langhorst

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Abstract The objectives of the study were identification, quality evaluation and summary of RCTs on complementary and alternative medicine as defined by the National Institute of Health with the exception of dietary and nutritional supplements. A computerized search of databases from 1990 (year of publication of the ACR criteria for fibromyalgia) to July 2007 was performed. The RCTs were assessed by a methodological quality score. A total of 23 RCTs issued from 1992 to 2007 on acupuncture, balneotherapy, thermotherapy, magnetic therapy, homeopathy, manual manipulation, mind–body medicine, diet therapy and music therapy were identified. The RCTs had an average group size of 25 with the number of groups ranging from two to four. The quality score assessment of the RCTs yielded a mean score of 51 out of 100. The average methodological quality of the identified studies was fairly low. Best evidence was found for balneotherapy/hydrotherapy in multiple studies. Positive results were also noted for homeopathy and mild infrared hyperthermia in 1 RCT in each field. Mindfulness meditation showed mostly positive results in two trials and acupuncture mixed results in multiple trials with a tendency toward positive results.

Tendencys for improvement were furthermore noted in single trials of the Mesendeck system, connective tissue massage and to some degree for osteopathy and magnet therapy. No positive evidence could be identified for Qi Gong, biofeedback, and body awareness therapy.

Keywords Qualitative systemic review · Acupuncture · Balneotherapy · Thermotherapy · Magnetic therapy · Homeopathy · Manual manipulation · Mind–body medicine · Diet therapy · Music therapy

Abbreviations
FMS Fibromyalgia syndrome
RCT Randomized controlled trial
CAM Complementary and alternative medicine
FIQ Fibromyalgia impact questionnaire
TP Tender point
TPC Tender point count
VAS Visual analog scale

Introduction
Fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) is a chronic myoskeletal pain disorder characterized by widespread pain and tenderness at marked sites of the body defined as tender points. It is often accompanied by other characteristic symptoms as sleep disorders, fatigue or morning stiffness and associated with various syndromes such as irritable bowel syndrome or depression [4]. First formally defined by Smythe and Moldofsky in 1977 [1], it has since then received several definitions [1–3] that varied in their emphasis of concomitant syndromes and the importance
Complementary and Alternative Therapies for Fibromyalgia

Leslie J. Crofford, MD, and Brent E. Appleton, MD

Introduction
Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is described by Banush [1] as treatments outside the prevailing scientific mainstream. These treatments can be safe and effective, unsafe and ineffective, or questionable. A broad definition of alternative medicine would include essentially all non-traditional and allopathic medical therapeutics, some of which are based on practices that differ by history and geography, and others purely by different therapeutic concepts. When there are few or no clearly effective treatments for a given condition, it is expected that treatment alternatives will be sought. This is often true in rheumatic disease, in which conditions are chronic and symptoms may be difficult to manage. Musculoskeletal pain is a problematic symptom for which alternative treatments are frequently sought [2].

No pharmaceutical therapies have been successful in treating fibromyalgia (FM) over the long term. Most patients have numerous symptoms in addition to pain, including sleep disturbance, fatigue, irritable bowel, and psychologic distress. Because all of these symptoms are unresponsive to conventional pharmacologic treatments, patients with FM often present their treating physicians a list of vitamins, minerals, supplements, and prescribed therapies. Despite considerable patient interest, a cross-sectional study of 82 patients with FM demonstrated that those who used CAM in the previous 6 months were not different from those using traditional medical treatment with respect to pain and function [3].

Patients seek alternatives to prescribed medications that are ineffective or have unpleasant side effects. Alternative therapies are generally perceived to be more “natural” and, as a result, to have fewer adverse effects. In addition, complementary approaches address symptoms that are often ignored by conventional therapeutic regimens, including fatigue and cognitive dysfunction. The percentage of patients with rheumatic disorders using alternative therapies ranges from 33% to 100%, with 91% of patients with FM using CAM over a 12-month period [4]. Most of these (70%) used over-the-counter products; 26% tried dietary changes. In a questionnaire survey of 36 patients with FM, those using CAM were more likely to be in a higher socioeconomic group and to have FM for a longer duration [5].

There are different origins and philosophies involved in the various kinds of CAM practices. Some techniques and therapies are based on historical practices of traditional Chinese or Indian (Ayurvedic) medicine; others are based on nontraditional concepts of health and medicine. Nontraditional concepts include holistic and herbal medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, hydrotherapy, and naturopathic and osteopathic medicine. Although these practices were derived differently and have some differences in their philosophies, some therapeutic concepts are not unique to any one of these forms of CAM. The
Are Psychological Treatments Effective for Fibromyalgia Pain?

Kati Thieme, PhD, and Richard H. Gracely, PhD

Introduction

Fibromyalgia (FM) is a chronic pain disorder characterized by the distribution of widespread pain. The 1990 American College of Rheumatology (ACR) diagnostic research criteria require pain in all four major quadrants of the body and the axial skeleton, in addition to demonstrable tenderness evoked by 4 kg of manual thumb pressure at 11 of 18 defined "tender points." FM is more prevalent in women of childbearing age [1]. The primary symptom of pain is often accompanied by fatigue, decreased function, unrefreshing sleep, and comorbidities such as chronic fatigue syndrome, multiple chemical sensitivity, and irritable bowel syndrome. FM is difficult to treat and the underlying mechanisms are essentially unknown.

Treatment approaches for FM mostly rely on pharmacologic approaches, especially with tricyclic antidepressants and more recently anticonvulsants (pregabalin) and serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (desvenlafaxine, milnacipran) that have been approved in the United States and Europe or have sought approval for the treatment of FM. A meta-analysis of nine studies on the efficacy of tricyclic antidepressant medication showed the most significant effect on quality of sleep, little therapeutic effect on stiffness, and the least effect for sensitivity to pressure. Thirty percent of patients were responders (~30% improvement of symptoms) [2], and recent studies have demonstrated a similar responder rate of 30% to 50% for serotonin reuptake inhibitors [3,4].

The modest effects of pharmacotherapy delivered in isolation have led to treatment approaches including several nonpharmacologic factors. Nonpharmacologic treatments hold the limited efficacy of pharmacotherapy and are particularly suited for FM treatment based on evidence of the significance of psychological factors in FM development and maintenance. Besides pain, fatigue, and stiffness [5], one of the six most frequently cited exacerbating factors involved some form of emotional distress in 83% of responding patients. Additional factors included weather changes (80%), sleep disorders (79%), strenuous activity (70%), mental stress (68%), and worrying (60%) [6*]. Chronic stress (41.9%) and emotional trauma (31.3%) were also identified as triggering events. Female gender, psychological vulnerability to stress, and a stressful, often frightening environment and culture are important antecedents of FM [7]. Depression and anxiety are frequent comorbid factors in FM [8,9] associated with changes in pain perception and central hyperexcitability [10], possibly mediated by inhibited serotoninergic function consistent with a mediating mechanism of central disinhibition [11].

Growing evidence supports the hypothesis of augmented pain processing in FM patients that is initiated and maintained by the interactions of sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral factors [12]. The presence of mechanisms that likely respond to nonpharmacologic approaches and the modest efficacy of conventional and more recent pharmacotherapies suggest a need for concomitant psychotherapeutic treatment methods designed to reduce pain-reinforcing cognition and behavior. This review considers four broad classes of psychotherapeutic techniques that have been unevenly applied to FM. For example, an internet survey of 2596 patients found that...
Fibromyalgia and non-celiac gluten sensitivity: a description with remission of fibromyalgia

Carlos Iusii · Isabel Colmenero · Fernando Casco · Eva Tejerina · Natalia Fernandez · José I. Serrano-Vela · María J. Castro · Luis F. Villa

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Abstract Fibromyalgia (FM) syndrome is a disabling clinical condition of unknown cause, and only symptomatic treatment with limited benefit is available. Gluten sensitivity that does not fulfill the diagnostic criteria for celiac disease (CD) is increasingly recognized as a frequent and treatable condition with a wide spectrum of manifestations that overlap with the manifestations of FM, including chronic musculoskeletal pain, asthenia, and irritable bowel syndrome. The aim of this report was to describe 20 selected patients with FM without CD who improved when placed on a gluten-free diet. An anti-transglutaminase assay, duodenal biopsies, and HLA typing were performed in all cases. CD was ruled out by negative anti-transglutaminase assay results and absence of villous atrophy in the duodenal biopsy. All patients had intraepithelial lymphocytosis without villous atrophy. Clinical response was defined as achieving at least one of the following scenarios: remission of FM pain criteria, return to work, return to normal life, or the discontinuation of opioids. The mean follow-up period was 16 months (range 5–31). This observation supports the hypothesis that non-celiac gluten sensitivity may be an underlying cause of FM syndrome.

Keywords Fibromyalgia · Celiac disease · Gluten sensitivity · Intraepithelial lymphocytosis

Introduction

Fibromyalgia (FM) is a commonly recognized syndrome characterized by pain, sleep disturbance, and fatigue combined with a general increase in medical symptoms, including problems of memory or thinking, and often psychological distress [1]. The pharmacological treatment of FM results in only partial relief [2]. This condition is frequently associated with depression and irritable bowel syndrome.

Celiac disease (CD) is a frequent disease, affecting about 1% of the population that can be diagnosed at all ages under different clinical settings. The classic presentation of CD is chronic diarrhea, positive anti-tissue transglutaminase antibodies (anti-tTG), and villous atrophy with intraepithelial lymphocytosis observed by duodenal biopsy. CD often does not conform to the classical clinical description, and up to 50% of patients with adult CD lack prominent gastrointestinal symptoms [3, 4]. Clinical manifestations of CD include muscle and osteocutaneous pain, fatigue, and neurological and psychological symptoms [5, 6].
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