

Understanding Fibromyalgia Syndrome

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Fibromyalgia is one of the most common chronic pain disorders, affecting millions (mostly women) across the world. Mostly, middle aged women experience continued symptoms like body ache, muscle pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances and mood swings which may result in fibromyalgia syndrome.

Fibromyalgia syndrome is a common chronic disorder characterised by generalised muscle pain, fatigue and tenderness, at specifically designed points. The primary symptoms of fibromyalgia include widespread musculoskeletal pain, severe fatigue, restless legs, disturbed sleep, memory and mood alterations.

Most patients with fibromyalgia complain of experiencing an ache all over and their muscles feel like they were pulled or overworked. Though the severity of symptoms varies from patient to patient, fibromyalgia resembles a post-viral state. The condition typically develops between the ages 30-50, but can occur in people of any age, including children and the elderly.

Causes Of Fibromyalgia

The cause of FMS is unknown as those diagnosed with fibromyalgia suffer with this condition for different

reasons. The symptoms sometimes can begin after an accident (post-traumatic stress disorder), after a major surgical procedure, infection or after a period of psychological, emotional stress. It is found that people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and Lupus (SLE) are more vulnerable to get fibromyalgia. It is

often seen that the condition can run in families, pointing to a genetic link.

Fibromyalgia affects the way the brain processes pain signals, which intensify painful sensations and causes widespread pain. Sometimes, patients suffering with fibromyalgia also present with concomitant presence of tension



headaches, jaw pain, irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety or depression and cognitive and memory problems referred to as fibro fog. Most of these problems are psychosomatic in origin.

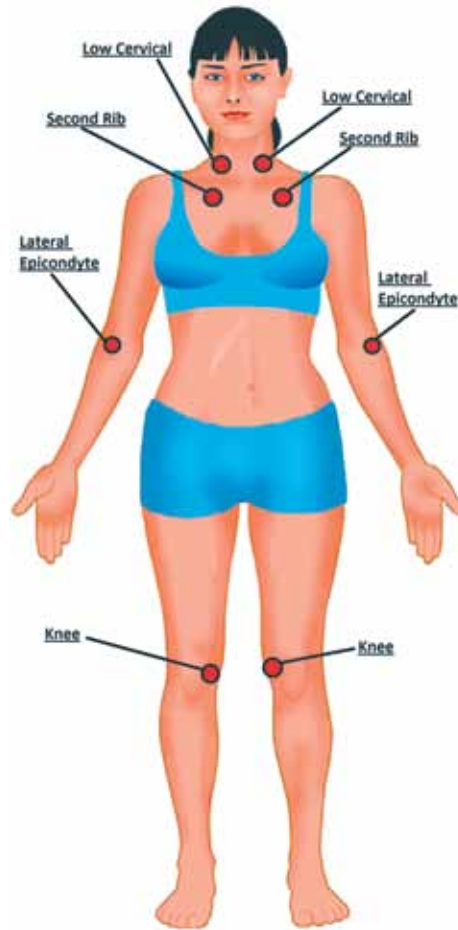
Diagnosis Of Fibromyalgia

Since there are no laboratory diagnostic tests which can confirm the diagnosis of fibromyalgia, this condition is often diagnosed on the basis of exclusion, which means after ruling out other ailments based on clinical features. However, a physician familiar with fibromyalgia can make the diagnosis based on two criteria - a history of widespread pain lasting for more than three months and the presence of tender points. Pain affects all four quadrants of the body - pain in both right and left sides, as well as above and below the waist.

Out of 18 possible tender points in the body, a patient with FMS must have 11 or more tender points. The most common trigger points are scattered over the back, neck, knees, shoulders, upper chest, hips and outer side of the elbows. These tender points are sensitive areas which hurt when pressed with a finger.

Suggested Lifestyle Changes

A very important fact about fibromyalgia is that it is not a progressive disease and it is not fatal. It also does not cause any damage to the joints, muscles or internal organs. In many cases, the condition improves if the patients



incorporates some strict lifestyle changes in addition to medication. Incorporating these lifestyle changes may help keep the trouble at bay and can also help the patient to live a healthy life.

- ◆ Eat healthy nutritious food
- ◆ Sleep well and sleep more
- ◆ Exercise more often
- ◆ Manage stress and adopt a positive attitude
- ◆ Meditate

Treatment With Homeopathy

Every individual suffering with FMS is different and unique and has their own set of symptoms. Their responses to stress and trigger factors are also different. Homeopathy takes a holistic approach to heal the patient, according to his/her characteristic symptoms.

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A detailed case history is taken, including the mental, physical and emotional symptoms. Homeopathic medicines are non-toxic and non habit forming. They treat the patient in a gentle manner without having any side effects. They stimulate the natural healing process of the body, so that resistance of the body increases and it becomes strong.

Homeopathic medicines also address the root problem of the patient, so that recurrences are reduced. These medicines can also provide relief to the patient from widespread pains and aches of fibromyalgia. Thus, it is a very good option and gentle treatment for fibromyalgia.

Some of the top grade homeopathic medicines generally used for fibromyalgia treatments are *Arnica*, *Bryonia*, *Rhus tox*, *Kalmia*, *Rhus tox*, *Ruta*, *Cimicifuga*, *Causticum*, *Gelsemium* etc. However, these medicines should be taken under the strict guidance of a qualified homeopathic practitioner.

