

FAST FACTS: Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia (FM) is characterized by chronic widespread pain and tenderness in muscles, tendons and other soft tissues. Symptoms are debilitating fatigue, sleep problems, headaches, depression, anxiety, and joint stiffness. Some may also report difficulty with swallowing, bowel and bladder abnormalities, numbness, tingling and memory and concentration problems. People with fibromyalgia tend to wake up with body aches and stiffness. For some, pain improves during the day and gets worse at night, others have pain all the time.



✓ What Medical Professional Assess

- Tender points found in the soft tissue on the back of the neck, shoulders, chest, lower back hips, shins, elbows & knees. Mild to severe pain that spreads from these areas.
- Tension or migraine headache
- Pain that may feel like a deep ache, a shooting, or burning pain
- Pain that feels like it's coming from the joints
- Pain that may get worse with activity, cold or damp weather, anxiety, and stress

✓ Possible Interventions

Treatments to relieve pain and help a person cope include:

- Non-Drug Treatments
 - Physical therapy, exercise and fitness programs
 - Stress-relief methods, including light massage and relaxation techniques
 - Cognitive-behavioral therapy, and support groups
 - Acupressure and acupuncture
 - Good sleep routines to improve quality of sleep
- Medications: used in combination with exercise and behavior therapy
 - Duloxetine (Cymbalta); Pregabalin (Lyrica); Milnacipran (Savella)
 - Other drugs also used to treat FM: pain relievers (opioids & nonopioids); antidepressants; antiseizure drug, muscle relaxants and sleeping aids
- Severe cases of FM may require a referral to a pain clinic

✓ What Caregivers can do to help their loved one with Fibromyalgia

- Write down and share information about your loved one's pain with their provider
- Use a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information useful to the provider
- Encourage your loved one to try a non-drug treatment to decrease minor pain