

## Fibromyalgia

### ***What is fibromyalgia?***

Fibromyalgia is a disorder that causes muscle pain and body stiffness. Researchers do not know what causes fibromyalgia, but many believe it is often a result of an injury or trauma. Research suggests that heredity could be a factor (it can run in families.) It occurs mainly in women who are ages 25-50. Researchers are unsure why women are affected more often than men.

### ***What are the symptoms?***

- ▶ Generalized pain throughout the body
- ▶ Burning or throbbing in many parts of the body
- ▶ Stiffness or aching in the body
- ▶ Trouble sleeping
- ▶ Fatigue (tiredness), even after sleeping a full night
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Bowel problems

There is no definitive blood test for fibromyalgia. To find out if you have fibromyalgia, your doctor will ask you about your health history. He or she should evaluate you for tender points.

### ***What you can do if you have fibromyalgia:***

- ▶ Exercise regularly. Choose activities that are gentle, like walking, biking, or swimming.
- ▶ Get a good night's sleep. Try to go to bed at the same time each night, and get up at the same time each day. Don't nap during the day.
- ▶ Reduce the stress in your life. Stress can make symptoms worse.
- ▶ Eat a balanced diet, and maintain a healthy weight.

### ***How is fibromyalgia treated?***

Your doctor may give you medicine to help you sleep. He or she may tell you to use over-the-counter medicines to help with pain or give you a prescription to help control pain.

***This information is general. If your doctor tells you something different, follow his or her instructions.***

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