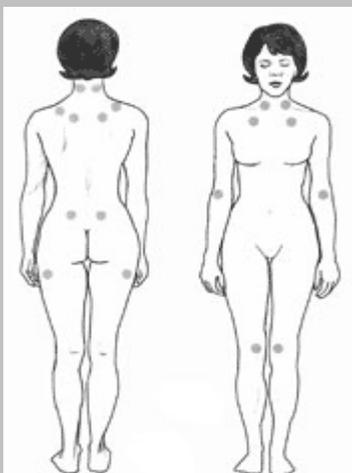


JUST DIAGNOSED: FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia is a condition of muscular skeletal stiffness and pain in some or all of 18 trigger points, generalized fatigue, sleep disturbances, and often additional elements accompany the symptoms such as: gastrointestinal disorders, headaches, concentration problems, or psychological symptoms of anxiety or depression.



SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FIBROMYALGIA

Physical therapy and stress relief methods including light massage and relaxation techniques are often tried first.

Causes and risk factors: unknown but, possible triggers of fibromyalgia are: physical or emotional trauma, or sleep disturbances. Risk factors include: female, heredity and having a rheumatic disease like rheumatoid arthritis or lupus.

Symptoms of fibromyalgia: A constant muscle pain especially tender at trigger points, poor sleep, fatigue and depression.

DIAGNOSIS: The American College of Rheumatology diagnostic criteria include widespread pain lasting 3 or more months, 11 of 18 trigger points are tender and other causes of these symptoms have been ruled out.

Treatment: medications may be used and include:

Medications:

Lyrica, Cymbalta, and Savella are all FDA approved fibromyalgia medications. These are in the antidepressant or antiseizure class but may reduce disease pain symptoms.

Other medications: pain medication like acetaminophen, tramadol and anti-inflammatory medications may be used to reduce pain.

Sleep medications may be needed.

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EXERCISE

Regular exercise is beneficial for fibromyalgia. At first exercise may make your symptoms worse so build up gradually. Walking, bicycling, swimming and water exercise may all be used. See your doctor before starting exercise.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Diet: Many people wonder if there is a diet they can follow to improve their fibromyalgia. Following a healthy diet is recommended.

Education: learning everything you can about fibromyalgia from reliable sources is empowering and makes you an active well informed part of your health care team.

Manage your activity: you don't have to get everything done all in one day, break up activities into manageable parts. Include enjoyable activities in your routine.

Cognitive therapy: therapy to help examine your attitudes and beliefs about your disease can help.



Helpful websites:

www.mayoclinic.com

www.rheumatology.org (look for patient resources)

www.blackhillsarthritis.org

Seek Support: Studies show people with adequate levels of support do much better in following their medical regimen. Black Hills Arthritis Association has a monthly support group! We meet the second Saturday of each month from 9-11 AM at Rapid City Regional Hospital in the Sylvan room. We also have an ongoing email support group. If interested just email info@blackhillsarthritis.com.

