



**Health
MATTERS**



Best Doctors®

DEALING WITH FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia is a chronic disorder characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain and tenderness, accompanied by fatigue, sleep, memory and mood issues. Researchers believe that fibromyalgia amplifies painful sensations by affecting the way the brain processes pain signals.

Women are much more likely to develop fibromyalgia than are men. Many people who have fibromyalgia also have tension headaches, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders, irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety and depression.

While there is no cure for fibromyalgia, a variety of medications can help control symptoms. Exercise, relaxation and stress-reduction measures also sometimes help.

Fibromyalgia affects two to four percent of people. There is no test to detect this condition, but lab tests or X-rays are usually conducted to rule out other health problems.

WHAT CAUSES FIBROMYALGIA?

The causes of fibromyalgia are unclear and may vary from patient to patient. Certain genes are likely to make people more prone to getting fibromyalgia and the other health problems that can occur with it. Genes alone, however, do not cause fibromyalgia.

Several theories exist about the causes of fibromyalgia, from hormonal disturbances to stress to genetics. While there is no clear consensus about what causes it, most researchers believe fibromyalgia results not from a single event but from a combination of many physical and emotional stressors. Spine problems, arthritis, injury, or other physical or emotional stress can sometimes trigger the illness.

WHAT CAN I DO TO MANAGE IT?

If you have fibromyalgia, you will need to work closely with your doctor to manage it. A specialist can diagnose the disease, and prescribe medication, physical therapy, and other treatments. In addition, a specialist may become someone you can confide in when you have worries and anxieties.

Talking to your primary care physician about your symptoms is always the first step, and your doctor will be able to determine the need for a referral, possibly to a rheumatologist or a neurologist.



DID YOU KNOW?

Best Doctors is a confidential benefit offered by your employer at no cost to you

34% of Best Doctors' cases see a change in diagnosis, and 68% see a change in treatment

If you have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia or are facing a medical decision, Best Doctors is here to help.

Call 1-866-904-0910 or visit www.bestdoctors.com/members.

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