

Getting the Right Diagnoses **Shouldn't Be Painful**

Focus on fibromyalgia and inflammatory arthritis



Certain types of inflammatory arthritis are often confused with fibromyalgia because the early-stage symptoms of both conditions are so similar. Both are chronic disorders earmarked by long-lasting pain.

Both fibromyalgia and inflammatory arthritis sufferers have pain and stiffness in the morning. Other common symptoms shared by the two conditions include:

- fatigue
- sleep disturbances
- limited range of motion
- numbness or tingling

Distinguishing between the two to yield a proper diagnosis is often difficult, but it is imperative to ensure proper treatment.

There are several types of inflammatory arthritis which include rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, among others. Inflammatory arthritis often leads to inflammation of the joints and surrounding tissues, and long-term cases can cause joint deformation and disability. Fibromyalgia, however, is a condition

associated with widespread chronic pain, fatigue, memory problems, and mood changes. Unlike inflammatory arthritis, it does not lead to muscle or joint damage.

Fibromyalgia affects more than 3.7 million Americans, the majority of whom are women between the ages of 40 and 75. People with other rheumatic diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus, are at greater risk for fibromyalgia, as are women who are overweight or inactive.

The condition affects not only joints, but muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues in the elbows, hips, chest, knees, lower back, neck, and shoulders. Fibromyalgia can develop alone or in tandem with inflammatory arthritis.

Tests to distinguish fibromyalgia and inflammatory arthritis include X-rays, blood tests, and ultrasound. But misdiagnosis caused by the similarities between the two is common, which is why a second opinion from Best Doctors can be particularly helpful in such cases.

With Best Doctors, an expert from our worldwide network of specialists will review your case and make recommendations that either support or refute your initial diagnosis, with recommendations for next steps.

If you have been told that you have either of these conditions, you owe it to yourself to take the pain out of your diagnosis and take advantage of Best Doctors.

The benefit of *removing the doubt*
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