

## **Fibromyalgia Battle Plan**

### **What is Fibromyalgia?**

Fibromyalgia is a newly diagnosed condition that was once thought to be psychosomatic, and is now recognized as a legitimate, identifiable condition characterized by widespread pain in your muscles, ligaments and tendons, as well as fatigue and multiple “tender” points. Fibromyalgia is more common in women than in men. Previously, fibromyalgia was known by other names such as fibrositis, chronic muscle pain syndrome, psychogenic rheumatism and tension myalgias.

In most cases of fibromyalgia pain is intermittent and varies in intensity. For many people fibromyalgia affects them for a lifetime, however we believe with diligent adherence to our recommendations your symptoms can be greatly reduced and even eliminated over time. Studies show that fibromyalgia is not life threatening or progressive, meaning it does not get worse over time.

### **Causes of Fibromyalgia:**

The truth is doctors really don't know what causes fibromyalgia; it's likely that a number of factors contribute to the development of fibromyalgia. However the following list of potential causes seem to have found wide spread acceptance among those who specialize in this condition.

- **Sleep disturbances.** Some researchers theorize that disturbed sleep patterns may be a cause rather than just a symptom of fibromyalgia.
- **Injury.** An injury or trauma, particularly in the upper spinal region, may trigger the development of fibromyalgia in some people. An injury may affect your central nervous system, which may trigger fibromyalgia.
- **Infection.** Some researchers believe that bacterial infection may trigger fibromyalgia.
- **Abnormalities of the autonomic (sympathetic) nervous system.** Part of your autonomic nervous system — the sympathetic, or involuntary, system — controls bodily functions that you don't consciously control, such as heart rate, blood vessel contraction, sweating, salivary flow and intestinal movements. It's thought that sympathetic nervous system dysfunction occurs in people with fibromyalgia, particularly at night, which leads to fatigue, stiffness, dizziness and other signs and symptoms associated with the condition.
- **Changes in muscle metabolism.** For example, deconditioning and decreased blood flow to muscles may contribute to decreased strength and fatigue. Differences in metabolism and abnormalities in the hormonal substance that

influences the activity of nerves may play a role. If you exercise and build muscle and neglect the muscles later in life, this could be a cause of fibromyalgia.

- **Stress.** Psychological stress and hormonal changes also may be possible causes of fibromyalgia.

Current thinking focuses on a theory called "central sensitization." This theory states that people with fibromyalgia have a lower threshold for pain because of increased sensitivity in the brain to send pain signals. Researchers believe repeated nerve stimulation causes the brains of people with fibromyalgia to change. This change involves an abnormal increase in levels of certain chemicals in the brain that signal pain (neurotransmitters). In addition, the brain's pain receptors (neurons) — which receive signals from the neurotransmitters — seem to develop a sort of memory of the pain and become more sensitive, meaning they can overreact to pain signals. In this way, pressure on a spot on the body that wouldn't hurt someone without fibromyalgia can be very painful to someone who has the condition. But what initiates this process of central sensitization isn't known.

**Facts you should know:**

- Fibromyalgia is almost always misdiagnosed
- It is more common in once active people (e.g. high school athlete, who is now moderately active)
- Not effectively treated by drugs
- Not life threatening or progressive

**Signs and Symptoms:**

Signs and symptoms of fibromyalgia can vary, depending on the weather, stress, physical activity or even the time of day. Common signs and symptoms include:

- **Widespread pain.** Fibromyalgia is characterized by pain in specific areas of your body when pressure is applied, including the back of your head, upper back and neck, upper chest, elbows, hips and knees. The pain generally persists for months at a time and is often accompanied by stiffness.
- **Fatigue and sleep disturbances.** People with fibromyalgia often wake up tired and unrefreshed even though they seem to get plenty of sleep. Some studies suggest that this sleep problem is the result of a sleep disorder called alpha wave interrupted sleep pattern, a condition in which deep sleep is frequently interrupted by bursts of brain activity similar to wakefulness. So people with fibromyalgia miss the deep restorative stage of sleep. Nighttime muscle spasms in your legs and Restless Leg Syndrome also may be associated with fibromyalgia.
- **Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).** The constipation, diarrhea, abdominal pain and bloating associated with IBS are common in people with fibromyalgia.

- **Headaches and facial pain.** Many people who have fibromyalgia also have headaches and facial pain that may be related to tenderness or stiffness in their neck and shoulders. Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction, which affects the jaw joints and surrounding muscles, also is common in people with fibromyalgia.
- **Heightened sensitivity.** It's common for people with fibromyalgia to report being sensitive to odors, noises, bright lights and touch.

Other common signs and symptoms include:

- Depression
- Numbness or tingling sensations in the hands and feet (paresthesia)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mood changes
- Chest pain
- Dry eyes, skin and mouth
- Painful menstrual periods
- Dizziness
- Anxiety

### **Treatment and Prevention:**

While the medical community often recommends over the counter and prescription medicines in the treatment of fibromyalgia these often have side effects that may render them inappropriate. Several natural alternatives exist.

- For **pain reduction** doctors typically recommend nonsteroidal drugs combined with other pain medications. We prefer using phyto chemically potent compounds like those found in pomegranates, blueberries and most notably in Montmorency tart cherry concentrate.
- For **stress reduction** doctors often recommend anti-depressants, typically in a cocktail of anti-depressants and sleeping pills. Our natural alternative includes alkalizing green foods like our **Organic Kamut Blend** and the natural melatonin found in tart cherry concentrate like our **Apothe-Cherry** leading to significantly increased blood serum levels of this vital sleep-inducing hormone without the potential for addiction that is frequently associated with the pharmaceutical option.
- **Muscle relaxants** are another pharmaceutical drug that is often recommended and maybe rendered unnecessary by the use of magnesium rich foods like green foods or the use of a mineral supplement like **Ionic Elements**.
- **Behavioral therapy** is recommended for stress reduction, however simply exercising, doing yoga, learning stress reducing breathing techniques and even aromatherapy, essential oils, flower essence and massage can contribute to a dramatic reduction in stress.

Self-care is critical in the management of fibromyalgia.

- **Get enough sleep.** Because fatigue is one of the main characteristics of fibromyalgia, getting sufficient sleep is essential. In addition to allotting enough time for sleep, practice good sleep habits, such as going to bed and getting up at the same time each day and limiting daytime napping.
  - **Exercise regularly.** At first, exercise may increase your pain. But doing it regularly often decreases symptoms. Appropriate exercises may include walking, swimming, biking and water aerobics. A physical therapist can help you develop a home exercise program. Stretching, good posture and relaxation exercises also are helpful.
  - **Pace yourself.** Keep your activity on an even level. If you do too much on your good days, you may have more bad days.
  - **Maintain a healthy lifestyle.** Eat healthy foods. Limit your processed food intake, which includes salt, sugar, hydrogenated oil, dairy and animal fat, also **caffeine**, artificial colors, flavors, and sweeteners. Dramatically increase your consumption of oily fish and raw whole foods (fruits, vegetables).
  - **Far Infrared Sauna.** Detoxify through perspiration. The Far Infrared sauna helps remove deeply imbedded toxins and is clinically proven to reduce chronic pain by imitating the most health giving spectrum of sunlight with none of the harmful effects whatsoever.
  - **Reduce stress.** Develop a plan to avoid or limit overexertion and emotional stress. Allow yourself time each day to relax. That may mean learning how to say no without guilt. But try not to change your routine completely. People who quit work or drop all activity tend to do worse than those who remain active. Try stress management techniques, such as deep-breathing exercises or meditation.
  - **Yoga.** The combination of exercise, strength and flexibility along with promoting stress reduction make yoga a potentially integral part of fibromyalgia treatment along with lymph drainage massage and stretching.
  - **Proper hydration.** Dehydration causes muscle sensitivity pain, and cramping. It is important to consume one half your body weight in ounces each day minimum and no more than one ounce per pound maximum.
- 2). Nutritional Supplements
- Green Juices like **Organic Barley Green Juice**<sup>™</sup> and **Organic Kamut Blend**<sup>™</sup> help with detoxification and contain magnesium, a cofactor in many enzyme systems involved in blood sugar control. Take 3 – 5 servings per day.
  - **Apothe-Cherry**<sup>™</sup> naturally contains melatonin, which may help regulate sleep patterns. Take 2 tbs. mixed with 6 ounces of water- best taken ½ hour to an hour prior to bed.

- **40x Aloe Vera Concentrate**<sup>™</sup> contains mucopolysaccharides they help IBS that is often associated with fibromyalgia. Mix a couple drops up to a tsp. into your evening Apothe-Cherry drink. The aloe helps to suspend the melatonin in the blood 3 times longer than when the cherry juice is taken alone.
- **Flax Advantage**<sup>™</sup> – contains linoleic acid, which can stimulate brain function. Consume ¼ cup of flaxseeds daily- *make sure to grind them fresh each day.*
- **Master Amino Complex**<sup>™</sup> makes complete protein available to the body within 22 minutes and provides 99% assimilated protein to help provide amino acids to the brain, muscles and tissue. Take 1 tablet for every 50 lbs of body weight twice a day.
- **Joint Flex** increases circulation and helps reduce pain in joints, tendons and ligaments
- **Ionic Elements** contain a wide variety of bio available minerals including a high amount of magnesium, which is necessary for all involuntary muscle reactions. It is the body's inability to regulate involuntary muscle reactions that may trigger symptoms of fibromyalgia.
- **Revive-It-All**<sup>™</sup> is specially designed to increase the effective communication between neuron transmitters and neuro-receptors. Some theories are focusing on neuro transmitter efficiency as potentially liable in fibromyalgia suffers
- **Aktivated Barley**<sup>™</sup> contains polysaccharides carbohydrates in the form of a beta glucan 'gel' that help heal the intestines and reduce the symptoms of IBS.
- **Cracked Cell Chlorella** The "tender point index" of fibromyalgia patients declined significantly after only two months of chlorella supplementation (10 grams daily)
- **Vir-U-Sure** due to the potential virally induced component of fibromyalgia we recommend Vir-U-Sure; nature's most promising natural support for your bodies fight viral infections.

### **Protocol for PHP Supplements:**

Take above products according to label recommendation.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration and are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Purium Health Products recommends consulting your physician on this or any nutritional regimen, preferably a physician specializing in integrative medicine.*

*If you need advice on how to approach your doctor on health/ nutrition, please see our archived Consumer Education Conference Call on [www.phporder.com](http://www.phporder.com) (under Education section) titled "How to Talk to your Healthcare Provider".*

*PHP is based on the tradition of Naturopathics, which operates on the premise that our bodies are self-healing if given the right tools and environment. This tradition has been well practiced for over 5,000 years!*