

Argus Orthopaedic Zone

Fibromyalgia

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

I have not written about Fibromyalgia before, because it is not a condition that I actually treat.

As an Orthopaedic Surgeon whose specialty is the whole musculoskeletal system, I certainly know a lot about Fibromyalgia. I have many patients who say they have it and I have to recognize it in patients who may not realize they have it. In patients who have the condition, it can very much affect a patient problem I am trying to treat.

Other Names For Fibromyalgia

Fibrositis
Fibromyositis

Definition

- A common musculoskeletal condition
- Not inflammatory
- Not affecting joints (non-articular)
- Fatigue
- Generalized muscular pain
- Feeling of stiffness even though joints are spared
- Sleep disorder
- Affects women between 20 - 60 years the most
- Cause is unknown

Patient Symptoms

- Widespread pain present for at least 3 months
- Tenderness at 11 or more specific tender point sites
- Pain on both sides of the body
- Pain above and below the waist
- Pain in spinal areas
- Stiff feeling
- Sleeplessness
- Fatigue worse in the morning
- Depression, anxiety
- Can be associated with many other complaints
 - Migraine or tension headaches
 - Irritable bowel
 - Frequent urination
 - Hands and feet tingling

Tests

Tenderness on examination in at least 11 of the 18 tender point sites.

Joint examination is normal.

No x-rays can diagnose the condition.

There are no laboratory tests that diagnose fibromyalgia.

Can Be Confused With.....

Bursitis or tendinitis

Carpal tunnel

Hypothyroid

Multiple Sclerosis

Tenosynovitis

Treatment

Fibromyalgia is not life threatening or progressive. No permanent changes occur in the musculoskeletal system.

- Narcotics can be very habit forming in these patients. Be careful!!
- Corticosteroids have no use in treatment.
- Internists and family physicians use some other medications of their choice.
- Stretching programs are helpful.
- Aerobic exercise program can help.
- There are fibromyalgia support groups.
- Professional counseling can be of benefit.

Office Website and Argus Orthopaedic Archive

For a tremendous amount of musculoskeletal and Orthopaedic surgery information check out the office website www.orthopodsurgeon.com which also takes you to Your Orthopaedic Connection. It contains a huge amount of Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal information.

In addition, the website has the archive of every article I have written for you in Shepherd Argus. All the articles are listed from most recent back to the first one! Check it out for interesting articles you may have missed.

I appreciate all of you loyal readers and patients, present and future and welcome all newcomers!

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives. I specialize in you.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush