

FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia refers to a condition of chronic, whole body pain, characterized by inflammation of muscle and fibrous tissue (tendons, ligaments, etc). Canadian estimates suggest that between 3% and 5% of our population experiences fibromyalgia, and recent evidence shows it has a significant prevalence, even among children.

Overall, fibromyalgia can cause considerable pain and disruption of daily activities and is associated with an elevated risk for a number of mental/emotional health problems.

Thankfully, there are effective strategies to treat and manage fibromyalgia. Many sufferers find that a combination of healthy nutrition, lifestyle modification, acupuncture, appropriate supplementation with nutrients and herbal medicines, along with mental/emotional counselling can positively impact symptoms.

How does Nutrition Influence Fibromyalgia?

Medical studies show that among overweight individuals with fibromyalgia, weight loss results in significant improvement in several symptoms associated with the diagnosis. Among people with a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 25, slow and steady weight loss (1-2 pounds per week, until 5% to 10% of initial body weight is lost) has shown to improve symptoms of fibromyalgia.

Of course, healthy eating is an important way

to combat fatigue and maintain energy levels throughout the day. In addition, providing the body with anti-inflammatory foods and nutrients can help manage pain.

How does Lifestyle Influence Fibromyalgia?

Exercise is one of the most powerful tools to manage the symptoms of fibromyalgia. Many types of exercise can help such as aerobic exercise, weight training, yoga, tai chi, or any other gentle physical activity that you find enjoyable.

Fibromyalgia symptoms also benefit greatly from Mind-Body therapies. These therapies essentially teach your body and mind how to relax. The pain, fatigue and mental symptoms of fibromyalgia are exacerbated when the mind and body are in a stressful state. Therefore, many people feel much better when they make an effort to consciously relax the mind and body on a daily basis. Relaxation can take many different forms such as deep breathing, yoga, meditation, prayer, guided visualizations or massage therapy.

Are there Additional Treatments specifically for the Pain of Fibromyalgia?

Acupuncture has demonstrated success in treating fibromyalgia. People with fibromyalgia often find that acupuncture treatments decrease their pain, improve their energy and leave them feeling relaxed and positive.

SOURCE: **DR. AMANDA GUTHRIE**, BSc, ND, Naturopathic Doctor
28 Park Road (Yonge & Bloor), Toronto, ON M4W 1M1
416.944.9186 WholeHealthToronto.com

