



## **FIBROMYALGIA AND CHRONIC PAIN DISORDERS**

Fibromyalgia (FM) is a disorder classified by the presence of widespread pain in your muscles, ligaments, and tendons, and a heightened and painful response to gentle touch. Other core features of the disorder include debilitating fatigue, sleep disturbance and joint stiffness. Fibromyalgia is a chronic condition and is more common in women than in men.

Some symptoms of fibromyalgia include:

- Chronic, widespread pain.
- Moderate to severe fatigue.
- Needle-like tingling of the skin.
- Muscle aches.
- Prolonged muscle spasms.
- Weakness in the limbs.
- Nerve pain.
- Functional bowel disturbances.
- Chronic sleep disturbances.
- Cognitive dysfunction (known as "brain fog" or "fibrofog"), which may be characterized by impaired concentration, problems with short and long-term memory, short-term memory consolidation, impaired speed of performance, inability to multi-task, cognitive overload, diminished attention span and anxiety and depressive symptoms.

The exact cause of fibromyalgia is unknown, however some hypothesis are listed below:

- Genetics.
- Stress.
- Sleep disturbances.
- Reduced levels of dopamine production during painful stimulation.
- Abnormal serotonin production.
- Abnormal Human Growth Hormone production.
- Psychological factors such as anxiety or depression.

Treatment of fibromyalgia and other chronic pain conditions include:

- Identify any causes of stress or emotional factors.
- Exercise to improve fitness and sleep, and reduce pain and fatigue in some people with chronic pain.
- Temporary relief of pain by using modalities such as heat.
- Manual therapy to decrease muscle spasm and pain, and increase overall functional movement of joints throughout the body.