

4 Simple Changes to Regain Your Life from Fibromyalgia or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

According to the American College of Rheumatology, Fibromyalgia affects 3 to 6 million Americans. Other sources say the total number affected could be 8 million people. It primarily occurs in women of childbearing age, but children, the elderly, and men can also be affected. (Approximately 80 percent to 90 percent of affected people are women.)

Fibromyalgia is a chronic condition characterized by fatigue and widespread pain in your muscles, ligaments and tendons. At first, it was not considered an illness at all. Doctors could not find anything wrong with patients so they believed it to be psychosomatic.

Slowly that dismissive view is changing. Published research at Johns Hopkins, University of Pennsylvania and other top research facilities points to immune dysfunction and cardiac abnormalities in these illnesses. It is difficult to believe that some doctors still regard people with Fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome as nothing more than "extremely worried well people";

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS or chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome, CFIDS) is a chronic, often debilitating disorder of unknown cause characterized by fatigue, pain and cognitive disorders. Often severe cognitive complaints differentiate the syndrome from similar disorders and usually occur in a later stage of the disease.

There is no evidence to sustain the thought that CFS or Fibromyalgia is a contagious disease. Contagious diseases typically occur in well-defined clusters, either as outbreaks or epidemics.

What Causes Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome?

Asking what causes Fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue syndrome can be a tricky question, depending on whom you ask. Doctors and researchers believe there is not a single cause of Fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue syndrome. At this point doctors are just not sure what causes these illnesses.

While the cause of Fibromyalgia is unknown, researchers have several hypotheses about causes or what triggers the illness. Some scientists believe that the syndrome may be caused by an injury or trauma. This injury may affect the central nervous system.

Fibromyalgia may be associated with changes in muscle metabolism, such as decreased blood flow, causing fatigue and decreased strength. Others believe an infectious agent such as a virus in susceptible people may trigger the syndrome, but no such agent has been identified.

Research proposes that CFS may be caused by an immunologic dysfunction or altered capacity of certain immune functions. One thing is certain at this time: there are no immune disorders in CFS or Fibromyalgia patients traditionally affiliated with disease.

That suggests a different approach is needed to reach the state of health you want.

4 Simple Changes to Shift Your Life From Fibromyalgia or CFS

Many studies have indicated that a healthy lifestyle including diet, exercise, relaxation techniques and sufficient sleep offer the most effective approaches for reducing fatigue and pain from CFS and Fibromyalgia.

1. Nutrition/Diet

A common thread in many cases seems to be a tendency to feel better when refined sugar, caffeine, alcohol, fried foods, red meat, and highly processed foods, are kept to a sound personal minimum in the diet.

Try supplementing your current diet with greater quantities of raw or lightly cooked fruits and vegetables. Try substituting meats that are high in fat with fish or lean poultry. Drink plenty of water and take a good vitamin supplement to ensure that you are getting proper nutrition.

2. Quality Sleep: Seven Ways to Become Sleeping Beauty

This is perhaps the most important component of treating CFS/FM. The following tips will help you achieve more restful sleep. Try to follow as many of them as possible to obtain the best level of sleep you can:

- Try to go to bed earlier and at the same time everyday. Even on weekends, try to go to bed and wake at the same time. This will help your body get used to a set schedule and provide for a more restful sleep.

- Try to avoid any caffeine-containing beverages such as coffee or soda before going to bed. It is a stimulant that will keep you awake at night. Also, alcohol drinking should be kept to a minimum in Fibromyalgia sufferers.
- Don't eat a lot before bedtime. Generally, try not to eat within two hours of going to bed. Particularly avoid spicy or fatty foods and try to keep your "midnight snacks" to a minimum.
- Ensure that you have a comfortable mattress and pillow. Sometimes, people's poor sleeping habits stem from poor mattresses. What constitutes a comfortable bed is different for us all. Usually something that is not too firm and not too soft should be acceptable. Cervical pillows mold to the natural shape of your neck and eliminate any unwanted stresses on the muscles of your neck and upper back. Choosing the appropriate bed and pillow is often done by trial and error. Find the combination that gives you the most restorative sleep and stick with it.
- A regular exercise program will help you have a more deep and refreshing sleep on a consistent basis.
- Try and avoid daytime naps. By doing so you will be more tired at night and be able to sleep deeper, thereby waking up more refreshed. Naps may seem like they provide more sleep time, but they are counterproductive to getting rest. Naps during the day will affect how well you will sleep during the night and it gets the body out of sync with the regular sleep pattern, leading to insomnia at night.
- Keep a proper sleeping environment. This involves a quiet and cool room. A slightly cooler room is ideal for sleeping since this mimics your internal temperature drop during sleep and silence is more conducive to sleep.

3. Exercise: You Can Be More Than A Couch Potato

Many studies have indicated that exercise is the most effective component in managing Fibromyalgia, and patients must expect to undergo a long-term exercise program. Physical activity prevents muscle atrophy, increases a sense of well-being, and over time reduces fatigue and pain itself. Be sure to consult your physician before beginning any exercise program.

4. Relaxation Techniques: Even When You're In Pain

Relaxation and stress-reduction techniques are proving to be helpful in managing chronic pain. There is certainly evidence that people with Fibromyalgia have a more stressful response to daily conflicts and encounters than those without the disorder. A number of relaxation and stress-reduction techniques have proven to be helpful in managing chronic pain:

- Deep breathing exercises.
- Muscle relaxation techniques.
- Meditation.
- Hypnosis.
- Biofeedback.
- Massage therapy.

Your goal with these lifestyle suggestions is to modify the choices that are within your control. But obviously, many things in your life are not in your control and impact you on many different levels. But, you CAN gain control over these areas too.

A free ebook titled "Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: What you need to know, what you need to do" explains how you can regain control your health to enjoy a life free from the symptoms of Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

Obtain your free copy now at: <http://www.fibromyalgia-and-chronic-fatigue-help.com>

Get "the rest of the story" to start living the life you want and deserve!!

About The Author

Lee Berlemann's FREE ebook titled, "Fibromyalgia And Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: What You Need To Know, What You Need To Do" offers hope for all your health challenges. Obtain your FREE copy at: <http://www.fibromyalgia-and-chronic-fatigue-help.com>.