

## Treat Fibromyalgia With Acupuncture



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Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine can help people suffering from fibromyalgia. So, what is fibromyalgia? According to the American College of Rheumatology, fibromyalgia is the second most common rheumatic disorder in the United States behind arthritis. In 1987, fibromyalgia was recognized by the American Medical Association as a “true” illness and also as major cause of disability. Fibromyalgia is not a “fad disease”. Fibromyalgia is not psychological. Fibromyalgia is not infectious. Fibromyalgia is real.

Fibromyalgia is a complex syndrome characterized by pain amplification, musculoskeletal discomfort and systemic symptoms. The word “fibromyalgia” is derived from the Greek “algia”, meaning pain, “myo” indicating muscle, and the Latin, “fibro”, meaning the connective

tissue of tendons and ligaments. The word “syndrome” means a group of signs and symptoms that occur together and that characterize a particular abnormality.

For many years and even today, fibromyalgia remains difficult to diagnose. Patients complain of a wide range of symptoms that may include everything from fatigue, pain, stiffness, aching, sleep and bowel disorders, mental confusion, restless legs and even burning feet. Pain sensations for people suffering from fibromyalgia are intense and seem to be somewhat amplified. The fibromyalgia patient can even be sensitive to odors, sounds, lights and vibrations.

In addition to specific tender points, the essential symptom is pain. Seniors also appear to be more troubled by fatigue, soft-tissue swelling, and depression. In younger people, discomfort after minimal exercise, low-grade fever or below normal temperature and skin sensitivity are also common.

Patients with fibromyalgia carry with them the frustrations of years of attempts to be heard. They often have become tearful, defensive, hypersensitive or even hostile, with sudden mood shifts. They are in great pain and may have been ridiculed. They are genuinely disturbed that their bodies are not performing up to par while at the same time, their families, friends and employers are placing demands on them that can't be met.

Acupuncture and electroacupuncture

can be quite effective for treating fibromyalgia, the myofascial pain from “trigger points” as well as the depression associated with chronic pain. You, your medical doctors and your acupuncturist will develop a multi faceted treatment plan which would most likely consist of acupuncture for a minimum of 12 to 16 weekly visits. In addition to acupuncture, Chinese herbs, changes in diet, a stress reduction plan, exercise and counseling may be used. Treatment of chronic pain is most successful when it is approached in a multidisciplinary fashion with the focus not only on treatment of the underlying causes, but also on the secondary impacts of pain on the patient's life. A carefully selected medical and complimentary/alternative medicine team can help the fibromyalgia patient regain function and improve quality of life.

As early as November 1997, the National Institute of Health (NIH) stated that acupuncture could be an effective modality in treating fibromyalgia. In addition, they stated that not only can it help by treating the pain and discomfort, it also addresses the underlying problems that have caused the patient's imbalance and inability to maintain their bodies free flow of qi (pronounced “chee” and meaning the bodies vital energy).

So, if you are suffering from fibromyalgia, consider calling an acupuncturist today!