

From Pain To Freedom

**Harness the Latest Scientific and Natural
Medicine Breakthroughs to Understand and
Relieve the Symptoms of Fibromyalgia**

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Introduction

Fibromyalgia seems more a disease of mime explained in the charades of other ailments. The majority of persons suffering from Fibromyalgia have undergone numerous tests with multiple diagnoses before a medical professional reaches the diagnosis of Fibromyalgia.

Aspirin will often relieve a headache but the headache is not brought on by a deficiency of aspirin, therefore aspirin is not a cure for the headache but rather an aid in the relief of headache symptoms. When headaches reoccur we begin to look beyond the ease of symptoms for the root cause. Many times the cause of a headache is stress, muscle fatigue, spinal alignment, digestion issues, body temperature, lack of oxygen in the blood stream, dehydration, or a precursory sign of infection just to mention a few. One could almost conclude a headache as an early warning device of malfunction within the human machine but then aspirin should merely be considered a temporary fix while transitioning through the repair.

Chronic headache often is one of the **many** symptoms associated with Fibromyalgia but Fibromyalgia seems the mime portraying a spectrum of symptoms as an impressionist portraying personalities. It is the vast arrays of symptoms that go and come, appear or disappear that seem to make Fibromyalgia difficult to diagnose and treat because as a whole we are a society that treats the symptoms first; much like taking aspirin for a headache. When we relieve the symptom, usually discomfort or pain, we tend to rejoice in the relief and call it good.

There are as many causes to the mere symptom of a headache as there are symptoms to Fibromyalgia.

In this book, **From Pain to Freedom**, we will journey through the forest of Fibromyalgia symptoms, medical diagnosis, pain markers, symptom relief and press forward to Freedom Valley. With that said, it takes an open mind and a willingness to embrace that which is new to us in order to persevere forward.

The science of medicine today is absolutely astounding but equally so is the study of medical procedure and herbal symptom cures of ancient tribal cultures. Is it possible the “healing touch” of tribal spiritual leaders may have been the gateway to chiropractic care today? If you are of the belief that the body was designed to heal itself than you must also embrace that the power of the mind is in essence a major factor in that healing. If common sense tells you that a scale equally weighted is considered balanced than consideration might be paid that equality between mind and body would symbolize being balanced as an entity of one.

Relief from the symptoms of Fibromyalgia is a huge progressive step but without exploring the cause behind the symptoms and effort put forth to elevate or better control its causes it becomes a vicious circle of painful insanity.

From Pain to Freedom is an eye opening guide to the possibilities of a life free from the shackles of Fibromyalgia. Obviously I state “Guide to the possibilities” **not** a cure to Fibromyalgia. Learning different pain management techniques as well as the triggers that entice the painful symptoms could be considered the avoidance of Fibromyalgia symptoms and without symptoms or pain---well, you judge the name to that outcome.

You will learn the medical side of study into Fibromyalgia as to its suspected onset cause, diagnoses of prevalent symptoms and symptom and pain management as well as the naturopathic method to Fibromyalgia management which takes in an entire spectrum of all methods not encompassed by modern day medical science. Naturopathic study lends a hand of enlightenment to modern medical science but modern medical science is not often as accommodating to the study of naturopathy. Ignorance is closing a blind eye for a blind eye has no advantageous purpose to being closed.

Open minds to the possibilities that bliss between medical science and naturopathic science have to offer is a freedom. Freedom is the knowledge of knowing what freedom is in order to attain it. One must open their mind to accept knowledge; discernment of that knowledge is a choice.

Throughout this journey, you, accompanied by well documented medical science and naturopathic relief will be given great insight on Fibromyalgia, its symptoms and management to the fruition of freedom.

You will learn about medical advancements in the study of Fibromyalgia inclusive of symptom and pain management techniques.

You will learn the benefits of chiropractic care, acupuncture, deep tissue massage, tension point massage, reflexology, and more within the power of touch.

You will learn the many forms of meditation that will help you to quiet brain chatter and relieve stress, how to mentally relieve muscle tightness and fatigue and how to use your mind to over-ride the tensions that seem to be a precursor pain. James Allen authored a wonderful well known book: **As a Man Thinketh** of which “so shall he become” follows the title. John Maxwell lends the visionary quote: “What I perceive...determines what I receive...which determines how I achieve”. Both James Allen and John Maxwell allude to the power of thought in context to how we are perceive ourselves or how we can become just as Mind, Body and Spirit alludes to the totality of human balance. The many different meditation techniques will help you to achieve a better understanding of yourself, the power within and ability to take control of your feelings and healing.

We have five senses: Sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste to which naturopathic healing attunes. The saying “we are what we eat” is always intriguing because it applies to each of us as individuals. How certain foods react with one person’s make-up will differ to the next. Foods that affect us adversely seem to be directly correlated to our ability to rid toxins, the acid/alkalinity level of our body and the strength of our immune system. There are some foods that seem to resonate well with those that suffer with Fibromyalgia. **From Pain to Freedom** will not only give you an arsenal of food facts but also some easy recipes.

Lastly but not least you will learn what music and sound therapy, aroma therapy, use of essential oils and herbs, exercise and more have to do with freedom from the clutching pain of Fibromyalgia.

From Pain to Freedom is a concise collection of medical scientific findings and naturopathic study to put **YOU** in charge of managing your Fibromyalgia.

CHAPTER ONE

How Fibromyalgia Affects Your Body

Fibromyalgia syndrome (also known as "FMS" or "FM") is a complex, chronic condition, more common in women than in men, which causes widespread pain and fatigue, as well as a variety of other symptoms. The name fibromyalgia comes from "fibro" meaning fibrous tissues (such as tendons and ligaments), "my" meaning muscles, and "algia" meaning pain. Unlike arthritis, it does not cause pain or swelling in the joints themselves, but it produces pain in the soft tissues located around joints, skin, and organs in the body.

The pain of fibromyalgia typically consists of diffuse aching or burning described as "head to toe", and it is often accompanied by muscle spasm. Its severity varies from day to day and can change location, become more severe in frequently used parts of the body (i.e., the neck, shoulders, and feet). In some patients, the pain can be intense enough to interfere significantly with daily routines, while in others it causes only mild discomfort. Likewise, the fatigue of fibromyalgia also varies from person to person ranging from a mild, tired feeling to the exhaustion of a flu-like illness.

FMS is neither crippling nor fatal, yet it is responsible for impaired concentration, short and long-term memory problems, impaired speed of performance, inability to multi-task, and diminished attention span.

In addition to pain and fatigue, a number of allied symptoms/syndromes are currently associated with FMS. Patients typically experience one or more of the following:

Stiffness: Joint stiffness may be particularly apparent upon awakening and after prolonged periods of sitting or standing in one position or coincide with changes in temperature or relative humidity.

Increased Headaches or Facial Pain: Fibromyalgia patients may experience frequent migraines, tension, or vascular headaches. Pain may also consist of referred pain to the temporal area (temples) or behind the eyes. Approximately one-third of patients with fibromyalgia are thought to have pain and dysfunction of the temporomandibular joint, or TMJ, (located where the jaw meets the ear) which produces not only headaches but also jaw and facial pain.

Sleep Disturbances: Despite sufficient amounts of sleep, FMS patients may awaken feeling tired, as if they barely slept. Alternatively, they may have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep. Some also suffer from the condition, sleep apnea. The reasons for the non-restorative sleep and other sleep difficulties of fibromyalgia are unknown. However, early FMS research in sleep labs documented disruptions in the deep (delta) sleep of some fibromyalgia patients.



The main symptom that a condition of fibromyalgia patient exhibits is fibromyalgia muscle pain.

This is usually what people notice first and what gets them to go into the doctor. The biggest problem with fibromyalgia is actually in the diagnosis.

You see, there are no tests that are able to directly tell the doctor whether or not a patient has fibromyalgia, and so instead, they need to take tests for other conditions in order to rule them out.

Gastrointestinal Complaints: Digestive disturbances, abdominal pain, and bloating are quite common in FMS as are constipation and diarrhea (irritable bowel syndrome). In addition, patients may have difficulty swallowing food which research suggests is a result of objective abnormalities in smooth muscle functioning in the esophagus.

Genito-Urinary Problems: FMS patients may experience increased frequency of urination or increased urgency to urinate, typically in the absence of a bladder infection. Some may develop a more chronic, painful inflammatory condition of the bladder wall known as "interstitial cystitis" (IC). Women with FMS may have more painful menstrual periods or experience worsening of their FMS symptoms during this time. Conditions

such as vulvar vestibulitis or vulvodynia, characterized by a painful vulvar region and painful sexual intercourse, may also develop in women.

Paresthesia: Numbness or tingling, particularly, in the hands or feet, sometimes accompanies FMS. The sensation can be described as prickling or burning.

Temperature Sensitivity: A Person with fibromyalgia tends to be highly sensitive to ambient temperature. Some often feel abnormally cold (compared to others around them) while others feel abnormally warm. An unusual sensitivity to cold in the hands and feet, accompanied by color changes in the skin, sometimes occur in patients with fibromyalgia. This condition is known as "Reynaud's Phenomenon".

Skin Complaints: Nagging symptoms, such as itchy, dry, or blotchy skin, may accompany FMS. Dryness of the eyes and mouth is also common. Additionally, fibromyalgia patients may experience a sensation of swelling, particularly in extremities, like fingers. A common complaint is that a ring no longer fits on a finger. Such swelling, however, is not equivalent to the joint inflammation of arthritis; rather, it is a localized anomaly of FMS whose cause is currently unknown.

Chest Symptoms: Individuals with fibromyalgia who engage in activities involving continuous, forward body posture (i.e., typing, sitting at a desk, etc.) often have special problems with chest and upper body pain known as "thoracic pain and dysfunction". Shallow breathing and postural problems often accompany the pain. Patients may also develop a condition called "costochondralgia" which involves pain in the muscles located where the ribs meet the chest bone.

Disequilibrium: FMS patients may be troubled by light-headedness and balance problems which manifest themselves in a number of ways. Since fibromyalgia is thought to affect the skeletal tracking muscles of the eyes, nausea or "visual confusion" may be experienced when driving a car, reading a book, or otherwise tracking objects. Difficulties with smooth muscles in the eye may also cause additional problems with focus. Weak muscles or trigger points in the neck or TMJ problems in the jaw may also cause dizziness or disequilibrium.

Cognitive Disorders: Individuals with FMS report a number of cognitive symptoms which tend to vary from day to day. These include difficulty concentrating, short-term memory lapses, and being overwhelmed easily. Many fibromyalgia patients refer to such symptoms as "fibro-fog".

Leg Sensations: Some FMS patients may develop a neurologic disorder known as "restless legs syndrome" (RLS) which involves an irresistible urge to move the legs particularly when at rest or when lying down. One recent study reported that 31% of the fibromyalgia patients studied had RLS. The syndrome may also involve periodic limb

movements during sleep (PLMS) which can be very disruptive to both the patient and to his/her sleeping partner.

Environmental Sensitivity: Hypersensitivity to light, noise, odors, and weather patterns is common and is usually explained as being a result of the hyper vigilance seen in the nervous systems of patients with FMS. Neurogenic inflammation, a discrete, localized inflammatory response which does not activate the immune response or show up in tests, presumably plays a part in the itching and rashes seen in FMS.

Allergic-like reactions to a variety of substances (i.e., medications, chemicals, food additives, pollutants, etc.) are common, and patients may also experience a form of non-allergic rhinitis consisting of nasal congestion/discharge and sinus pain, but in the absence of the immunologic reactions which the body experiences in allergic conditions.

Depression and Anxiety: Although FMS patients are frequently misdiagnosed with depression or anxiety disorders, research has repeatedly shown that fibromyalgia is not a form of depression or hypochondriasis. However, where depression or anxiety exist concomitant to fibromyalgia, their treatment is important as both can exacerbate FMS and interfere with successful symptom management.



Many patients have gone to hospital for fibromyalgia treatment and found out that they are simply imagining the symptoms.

Therefore, another fibromyalgia self help technique that works includes changing how one thinks and leading a positive life.

In addition, learning the things that affect your stress levels and either avoiding them or work around them can release unwanted tension from the body and promote enhanced wellness.

This fibromyalgia self help technique has enabled many people live a happy and fulfilling life without the weakening pain that is fibromyalgia.

CHAPTER TWO

What Causes Fibromyalgia?

Although the cause of fibromyalgia syndrome is not currently known, research has uncovered significant information. For example, fibromyalgia syndrome often develops after a physical trauma (i.e., an accident, injury, or severe illness) that appears to act as a trigger in predisposed individuals. Such a trauma may affect the central nervous system which in turn produces the condition that we know as fibromyalgia.

During 1997, a team of investigators lead by Israeli researcher Dan Buskila, M.D., reported a study of the relationship between cervical spine injuries and the onset of fibromyalgia which uncovered that FMS was 13 times more likely to occur following a neck injury than an injury to the lower extremities. Early studies by Dr. Donaldson's research team in Calgary, Canada, suggest that in fibromyalgia patients, the most powerful electrical activity in the brain is inappropriately in the slowest brain waves (i.e., EEG slowing).

Therefore, there is reason to believe that significant physiological changes may occur in the body following a severe trauma, particularly when the neck or upper body is involved.

Researchers continue to explore a number of avenues which might explain the etiology of fibromyalgia. For example, studies suggest that there is a strong familial pattern in the occurrence of FMS, which often seems to follow the female side of the family. Thus, genetic research is of great interest to many researchers.

Moreover, there is strong evidence that major depression is associated with fibromyalgia, although the nature of the association is controversial. A

study that employed functional magnetic resonance imaging to evaluate brain responses to experimental pain among fibromyalgia patients found that depressive symptoms were associated with the magnitude of clinically-induced pain response specifically in areas of the brain that participate in affective pain processing, but not in areas involved in sensory processing which indicates that the amplification of the sensory dimension of pain in fibromyalgia occurs independently of mood or emotional processes.

An alternative hypothesis regarding the development of fibromyalgia in relationship to psychological conflict proposes that the disorder may be a psychosomatic illness as described by John E. Sarno's writing related to "tension myositis syndrome", in which chronic pain is proposed to be a psychic diathesis of the mind's subconscious strategy of distracting painful or dangerous emotions. Education, attitude change, and in some cases, psychotherapy are proposed as treatments.

Furthermore, the neurotransmitter serotonin (which modifies the intensity of pain signals entering the brain) appears to be deficient in patients with fibromyalgia. In fact, many of the medications currently used to treat fibromyalgia work to counteract this deficit. While it is becoming increasingly clear that there is a breakdown in the pain perception system in fibromyalgia patients, it is not yet known if the problem is related to allodynia (an increase in pain perception which occurs even though the stimuli sent from the various parts of the body are basically normal) or hyperalgesia (a "hyper" response to real pain stimuli).

Not long ago, medical researchers viewed fibromyalgia syndrome as a discrete medical entity. Increasingly, however, FMS is being seen as a condition which overlaps significantly with certain other systemic illnesses along with a number of regional conditions that affect particular body organs. One of the earliest proponents of this point of view was University of Illinois researcher Muhammad Yunus, M.D., who developed the concept of *Dysregulation Spectrum Syndrome* (DSS).

DSS is an umbrella term for a number of associated conditions that share common clinical characteristics and a similar bio-physiological mechanism. Dr. Yunus includes nine conditions besides FMS in his DSS family: chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), irritable bowel syndrome, tension headaches, migraine headaches, primary dysmenorrhea, periodic limb movement disorder, restless legs syndrome, temporo mandibular pain syndrome, and myofascial pain syndrome. He predicts that future research will add new members.

With this perspective, the long list of symptoms/syndromes associated with fibromyalgia can be seen in a special context rather than as one long, baffling list of seemingly incongruent complaints. When FMS and allied conditions are viewed as part of a spectrum, new, coordinated, multi-disciplinary approaches to research and treatment can be undertaken.

There is still much disagreement among researchers and patients alike regarding the extent to which systemic conditions like fibromyalgia syndrome, chronic fatigue syndrome, Gulf War syndrome, and multiple chemical sensitivities are similar, or even identical, conditions. The overall concept of overlap encourages significant changes in the thinking which has revolved around FMS.

CHAPTER 3

Official Diagnostic Criteria Of Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia syndrome has had a long, rather obscure, history as an illness. Concealed behind numerous medical aliases, FMS has existed throughout history and throughout the world. It was only in 1990, however, that official diagnostic criteria for FMS were established by the American College of Rheumatology (ACR). They include the following:

Bilateral FMS Tender Points As Defined by the ACR

Occiput: at the sub-occipital muscle insertions.

Low Cervical: at the anterior aspects of the inter-transverse spaces at C5-C7.

Trapezius: at the midpoint of the upper border.

Supraspinatus: at origins, above the scapula spine near the medial border.

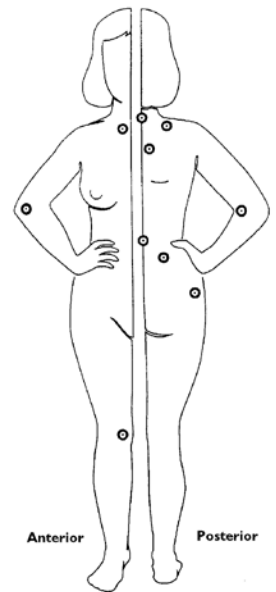
Second Rib: at the second costochondral junctions, just lateral to the junctions on upper surfaces.

Lateral Epicondyle: 2 cm. distal to the epicondyles.

Gluteal: in upper outer quadrants of buttocks in anterior fold of muscle.

Greater Trochanter: posterior to the trochanteric prominence.

Knee: at the medial fat pad proximal to the joint line.



Diagnostic Criteria

(1) **History of Widespread Pain:** Chronic, widespread, musculoskeletal pain for longer than three months in all four quadrants of the body. (Pain above and below the waist and on both sides of the body). In addition, axial skeletal pain (in the cervical spine, anterior chest, thoracic spine, or low back) must be present.

(2) **Pain in 11 of 18 Tender Point Sites on Digital Palpation:** There are 18 tender points that doctors look for in making a fibromyalgia diagnosis (see Figure). According to the ACR requirements, a patient must have 11 of the 18 to be considered as having fibromyalgia. Approximately four kilograms of pressure (or about 9 lbs.) must be applied to a tender point, and the patient must indicate that the tender point locations are painful.

As the ACR criteria suggest, a fibromyalgia diagnosis requires the "hands-on" evaluation of a patient by a medical professional skilled in fibromyalgia diagnosis. Since patients are not always aware of the specific anatomical origins of pain in their bodies, self-diagnosis is not advised.

Because routine laboratory and x-ray testing is usually normal in fibromyalgia patients, a complete medical history and physical exam by a physician are also crucial for a correct diagnosis. Since the symptoms of fibromyalgia mimic several other diseases (for example, myositis/polymyositis, the nerve damage of diabetes, thyroid disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and others), it is necessary to rule out those conditions before a FMS diagnosis is made.

While a FMS diagnosis does not preclude the co-existence of another condition, one needs to make sure that no other condition is mistaken for fibromyalgia syndrome so that a proper treatment can be initiated



Water aerobics is a very simple exercise that often works quite well for people suffering from fibromyalgia and which is something that you may be interested in trying as well if you are a sufferer yourself.

Especially if you are older in age this is going to be something that you should try, because it is gentle on the body and there is going to be a significantly lower risk of you getting injured in any way.

CHAPTER 4

The Conventional Medicine Approach

Fibromyalgia can be difficult to treat.

Not all doctors are familiar with fibromyalgia and its treatment, thus it requires a team approach consisting of physicians, chiropractors, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychiatrists, and an active role being played by the patient in order to achieve the best results.

Fibromyalgia treatments can be vaguely categorized in two; the traditional western medicinal treatment and the alternative treatments like naturopathic treatment.

Traditional western medicinal treatment

Following are some of the most commonly used categories of drugs for fibromyalgia.

Anti-depressants

Many people with fibromyalgia also suffer from depression. In these cases, antidepressant medications are prescribed in order to lift mood. However, regular doses of antidepressants are required in order to improve depression.

These include:

Tricyclic Antidepressants (TCAs)

Tricyclic antidepressants are among the oldest antidepressants on the market. They work by acting on serotonin and nor epinephrine, which are chemicals in the brain that help to transmit messages about pain and emotion. Low levels of these chemicals are associated with depression, fatigue and pain. TCAs work by slowing the breakdown of these chemicals. In low doses, tricyclics are also effective at reducing pain and facilitating restful sleep, both of which are helpful to fibromyalgia patients.

Studies show that TCAs are the best antidepressant drugs for people with fibromyalgia. About 32% of fibromyalgia sufferers experience relief with tricyclics. The most commonly prescribed TCA is amitriptyline; other tricyclics include doxepin, nortriptyline, and cyclobenzaprine. Though TCAs are highly effective, they are also associated with more severe side effects than other new antidepressant medications. These side effects include: dry mouth, constipation,

blurred vision, fatigue, and low blood pressure. People with glaucoma, heart conditions, or seizure disorders should refrain from taking TCAs.

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)

SSRIs are one of the newer classes of antidepressants. They are widely prescribed for depression as well as a variety of other ailments. SSRIs work by stopping the breakdown of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter, which helps the brain to communicate pain signals and emotions. SSRIs are highly effective at reducing feelings of depression and anxiety.

SSRIs are used in fibromyalgia in order to improve sleep patterns. SSRIs also help to bolster mood in fibromyalgia patients. Commonly prescribed SSRIs include: fluoxetine, paroxetine, and citalopram. SSRIs are not effective for pain relief and therefore are not used as often as TCAs. Recent studies show that SSRIs are most effective when used in combination with a TCA (for instance, fluoxetine and amitriptyline). Side effects of SSRIs are mild. This antidepressant's drug side effects include nausea, weight gain, anxiety, loss of sex drive, and headaches.

Serotonin Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs)

SNRIs are very similar to TCAs, as they work on both serotonin and norepinephrine in the brain. However, SNRIs are better able to balance levels of both of these neurotransmitters, leading to fewer side effects. SNRIs are commonly prescribed to alleviate depression and boost energy.

SNRIs are used in fibromyalgia to relieve pain and disability. They are also beneficial for treating symptoms of depression. The most commonly prescribed SNRIs are duloxetine and venlafaxine. Effects of this antidepressant medication include: indigestion, nausea, sexual dysfunction, and loss of balance. SNRIs are not recommended for people with heart conditions.



Milnacipran is the third new medicine for fibromyalgia that has won approval from the FDA though it is the first drug being introduced into the US that specially treats fibromyalgia.

The good news for people that plan on trying out this new medicine for fibromyalgia is that Milnacipran is safe as well as effective as revealed by a study of its use on more than two thousand patients of fibromyalgia.

Mixed reuptake inhibitors

Some newer antidepressants raise levels of both serotonin and norepinephrine and are therefore called mixed reuptake inhibitors. Examples of these medications include venlafaxine (Effexor), duloxetine (Cymbalta), and (Savella). In general, these drugs work better for pain than SSRIs, probably because they also raise norepinephrine, which may play an even greater role in pain transmission than serotonin.

Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines can sometimes help people with fibromyalgia by relaxing tense, painful muscles and stabilizing the erratic brain waves that can interfere with deep sleep. Benzodiazepines also can relieve the symptoms of restless legs syndrome. Doctors usually prescribe benzodiazepines only for people who have not responded to other therapies because of the potential for addiction. Benzodiazepines include clonazepam (Klonopin) and diazepam (Valium).

Analgesics

Analgesics are painkillers. They range from over-the-counter acetaminophen (Tylenol) to prescription medicines, such as tramadol (Ultram), and even stronger narcotic preparations. For a subset of people with fibromyalgia, narcotic medications are prescribed for severe muscle pain. However, there is no firm evidence that shows that narcotics actually work for patients to treat the chronic pain of fibromyalgia, and most doctors hesitate to prescribe them for long-term use because of the potential that the person taking them will become physically or psychologically dependent on them.

Non-steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, including aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), and naproxen sodium (Anaprox, Aleve), are used to treat inflammation. Although inflammation is not a symptom of fibromyalgia, NSAIDs also relieve pain. The drugs work by inhibiting substances in the body called prostaglandins, which play a role in pain and inflammation. These medications, some of which are available without a prescription, may help ease the muscle aches of fibromyalgia. They may also relieve menstrual cramps and the headaches often associated with fibromyalgia.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy

Cognitive behavior therapy is a form of psychotherapy that emphasizes the important role of thinking in the patient feels and what they do. Cognitive therapy works to modify or eliminate the effect that thought patterns have on the symptoms; behavioral therapy aims to help change behaviors that may contribute to the symptoms.

The symptoms of fibromyalgia are often exacerbated by feelings of stress and other negative emotions. Cognitive behavioral therapy can help to pinpoint these emotions and teach the patients how to deal with them in a way that won't cause symptom flare-ups. This form of therapy can also teach them how to modify or change certain behaviors to help reduce the severity of the pain and fatigue.

Cognitive behavior therapy is thought to relieve symptoms of pain and fatigue in 25% of fibromyalgia patients. Cognitive-behavior therapy has been proven effective for reducing sleep disturbances perpetuated by underlying factors common among fibromyalgia sufferers including: conditioned bedtime arousal, erratic sleep/wake scheduling, and spending too much time in bed. Cognitive behavior therapy also works well to relieve muscle pain and stiffness.

Trigger Point Injection Therapy

Trigger point injection therapy is a treatment used to relieve the pain and stiffness caused by trigger points in the muscles. Trigger points are like knots in the muscles, and they prevent the body parts from relaxing properly. In order to relieve trigger point tenderness, special injections containing anesthetics or corticosteroids are put directly into each trigger point. These injections "shut down" the trigger points, providing quick or immediate relief from pain.

Trigger point injections, though designed to relieve myofascial pain syndrome, can provide great benefits to those with fibromyalgia. Because so many fibromyalgia sufferers also have myofascial pain syndrome, Trigger point injections provide a variety of benefits to the patient:

- Trigger point injections provide quick, long-lasting relief from trigger point pain
- Injections reduce the amount of referred pain

- Injections help to minimize the effects of other symptoms, including fatigue, stiffness, and disability
- Injections can be done quickly and conveniently in your physician's office or at a pain clinic
- There is minimal recovery time involved in trigger point injection therapy

CHAPTER 5

Treating Yourself Using The Power Of Natural Remedies

The first thing that is going to strike anyone that becomes interested in using alternative medicine for fibromyalgia is that not only do you have to use these medicines but you need to also alter your diet and do exercises as well as try out massage therapy. Only then can you expect to get useful results. In addition, you have to also think about trying relaxation techniques and you should even consider getting chiropractor treatment.

You should try and use all the different available therapies to enhance the effects of alternative medicine for fibromyalgia. Fibromyalgia is believed to affect about five to six million Americans with most of the patients being females.

When it comes down to choosing alternative medicines for fibromyalgia you will do well to take nutritional supplements which are a wonderful choice, as these supplements are very useful in conquering fatigue and pain that are known to be major problems among people suffering from a fibromyalgia condition.

The ancient wisdom of natural remedies stem from the beginning of time. The shamans, healers and witch doctors never looked at the person as a collection of parts yet a system that is whole and thus is treated as whole.

When you look in the mirror you may only see your body, but actually you are a lot more than that.

You are your body, your emotional body and your spiritual body.

And that is and was what the natural practitioner looks at when a person comes receive treatment.

Today when we feel as if we are getting further and further away from ourselves, surprisingly we have become a lot more accustomed to search for natural remedies.

It is as if there is something in our hearts and in our intuition that is telling us that what we're looking for is hidden and is yet to be discovered in the ancient wisdom of natural remedies.

And that there is something that is a lot more close to our true nature.

Fact is conventional medicine suggest many different solutions but when you look at it closely they are basically treating the symptoms without suggesting a slightest cure for fibromyalgia.

Fortunately with over 5,000 thousand years of knowledge and success in healing various ailments there is a glimpse of hope in finding smarter and more human friendly ways to treat fibromyalgia.

Alternative medicine is also known as complimentary medicine and as the word suggest, it compliments other treatments.

Natural, plant based remedies are not the whole solution and should be taken as a complimentary aid.

You should also make sure that you consult your physician with any changes in your diet or natural remedies you are taking to be on the safe side.



When a person chooses to take holistic medicine for fibromyalgia they have to believe deep down in their minds that they must strive to achieve a proper balance in all the different aspects of their lives including nutritional, physical and emotional as well as environmental as too social and even spiritual.

However, using holistic medicine for fibromyalgia does not in any way imply having to foreswear use of conventional medicines and it also does not mean not using alternative or even complimentary therapies. In fact, the primary focus of using holistic medicine for fibromyalgia is to aim at preventing the disease rather than getting rid of the superficial symptoms.

Below are a few examples that will give you a feeling of the different solutions that could safely alleviate pain and the many other symptoms that come with FBS:

Magnesium happens to be a good choice as far as effective alternative medicine for fibromyalgia goes as it works by relaxing your muscles and the mineral also prevents onset of muscle spasms.

Herbs can be used in any alternative medicine for fibromyalgia and among the best of these herbs you should consider using is **ginkgo biloba** which has antioxidant properties that help improve the functioning of the brain and in addition it also helps the blood to circulate in all parts of the body.

Ginger is used in alternative medicine for fibromyalgia mainly because it has anti-inflammatory properties that help to control pain as well as swelling.

Turmeric is a herb that is widely used in alternative treatment of fibromyalgia because it provides greater antioxidant properties which can prove to be very useful in combating damage of free radicals. In addition, turmeric provides good anti-inflammatory functions that aid in alleviating pain as well as swelling in the muscles.

Olive leaf too is a herb that should be included in your treatment for fibromyalgia, as it is very effective in boosting your immune system and it also works very well in dealing with fatigue. In addition, any alternative medicine for fibromyalgia that contains olive leaf will help to lift your spirits and could also help you feel better about yourself.

In this chapter we will go deeply into each therapeutic system and explain its benefits to handling and alleviating the pain that accompanies your condition.

Acupuncture and Acupressure

Acupuncture therapy is used to eliminate pain and treat other health problems. It aims to restore balance to the body, helping to improve the overall function. It uses thin, metallic needles to stimulate special points throughout the body. These points, called acupoints or acupuncture points, correspond to the specific areas in the body that causes health problems. Acupuncture needles can remain in the body for up to 20 minutes.

Acupressure therapy is very similar to acupuncture, only it does not use needles to restore balance to the body. Instead, pressure is used. Using the fingers, knuckles, palms, elbows, or feet, an acupressurist applies pressure to specific areas on the body. This pressure is held for between 3 and 10 seconds, providing relief from symptoms and restoring health to the body.

Acupuncture and acupressure have actually shown to relieve pain symptoms caused by fibromyalgia. In a recent study performed by the Mayo Clinic, fibromyalgia acupuncture treatment was shown to reduce pain and depression. Acupuncture for fibromyalgia was also shown to increase energy and reduce fatigue. Other studies have illustrated that acupuncture remains effective for up to one month after treatment.

Craniosacral Therapy

Craniosacral therapy is an alternative treatment technique that is very similar to osteopathy and physical therapy. Craniosacral therapy is non-invasive and uses gentle palpations on the skin in order to restore health, reduce pain, and increase resistance to disease.

There has been no extensive research on craniosacral therapy in treating fibromyalgia. Many studies suggest that craniosacral therapy is helpful for the first few sessions. However, craniosacral therapy is highly regarded by many fibromyalgia sufferers. A large percentage of patients have tried craniosacral therapy at least once, and have found it to be extremely effective at reducing their symptoms of fibromyalgia syndrome. Craniosacral therapy is purported to reduce widespread pain, reduce the number of chronic headaches, increase range of motion, decrease chronic fatigue, and improve mood.

Herbs for Fibromyalgia

Herbal supplements are a non-conventional way of treating illnesses and symptoms of pain and discomfort. By using naturally sourced herbs, berries, and barks, people can reduce various symptoms and even cure some illnesses.

Because fibromyalgia can cause so many different symptoms, there are a wide variety of herbal remedies that a patient can use to treat them. The following are some of the most popular herbs used to treat the more common symptoms of fibromyalgia.

Depression:

Up to 50% of fibromyalgia patients suffer from depression. One herbal medication that has been used for years to treat depression is St. John's Wort. It helps to alleviate depression by inhibiting neurotransmitters, which influence mood. St. John's Wort also helps to alleviate stress and anxiety. However, St. John's Wort should never be taken with conventional antidepressants.

Muscle and Joint Pain:

Nearly 100% of sufferers experience these symptoms. Juniper berries and Cayenne is often used to help reduce muscle pain and inflammation. Cayenne contains capsaicin, which inhibits neurotransmitters responsible for communicating pain signals. Cayenne is applied topically, to sore areas around the body and 3-4 juniper berries are consumed about an hour before lunch.

Immune System Deficiency:

It is thought that fibromyalgia may be the result of an immune system disorder. If someone has fibromyalgia, his immune system may be compromised, preventing him from repairing much-needed muscles and tissues. Garlic, astragalus, and Echinacea are often used to help boost circulation, allowing oxygen and nutrients to flow throughout the body. This helps to improve the immune system, and reduce a wide variety of symptoms.

Sleep Disorders:

Sleep disorders plague many men and women with fibromyalgia. Unable to get restful sleep, these sleep disorders can contribute to pain and fatigue. Skullcap and valerian root are both used to help restore sleep patterns while ginseng is used to help combat fatigue caused by sleep disorders.

Massage Therapy

In massage therapy, the muscles and soft tissues are manipulated in order to relieve stress, reduce pain, and increase flexibility. Usually done with the hands, there are a variety of different techniques used to give a massage. Common techniques involve stroking, kneading, and palpating the muscles. Sometimes, a special instrument or device is used to help relieve tension in tight muscles. Hot and cold therapies are also used during massages in order to increase blood flow and relax muscles.

It is believed that massage therapy actually enhances the production of certain pain blockers, including endorphins, serotonin, and nor epinephrine. These hormones work to counteract pain signals conducted by the brain, and this would explain why massage offers such dramatic pain relief. Massage therapy benefits include increased blood circulation to the muscles allowing for faster muscle repair, increased flexibility, increased range of motion, decreased stress and depression, reduced pain, reduced stiffness, and improved sleep patterns.

There are a variety of different kinds of massages that are on offer by a massage therapist. Some of the most popular massages are:

Swedish massage

The Swedish massage technique is designed to increase the amount of oxygen that is delivered to the muscles. This helps to flush out toxins and improve the flexibility and health of your muscles. Swedish massage is characterized by long, gliding movements, which involve stroking the body with the thumbs, fingertips, and palms. However, Swedish massage also makes use of kneading and tapping techniques, and uses vibration to benefit the body.

Deep Tissue Massage

Deep-tissue massage is a vigorous therapy used to loosen areas of hardened or inflexible muscles and tissues. It targets the deep layers of the muscles and tendons, helping to release tension and chronic muscle pain. Deep, pressurized strokes are usually made along or across the muscles. Because deep tissue massage uses slower and deeper strokes than Swedish massage therapy, the patient may feel a little pain immediately following the treatment. However, this pain disappears within a day or so.

Myofascial Release

Myofascial release techniques help to relieve stiffness and tightness in the body's fascia, caused by myofascial pain. The fascia is a thin layer of tissue that covers all of the muscles and organs. In fibromyalgia, sometimes the fascia can become extremely short and tense, resulting in pain. Myofascial release therapy uses stretching techniques to relieve this pain.

Trigger Point Therapy

Trigger point therapy is a touch therapy that is used to eliminate trigger points. It is sometimes called myotherapy. During trigger point therapy, the practitioner exerts pressure on the trigger points by using her fingers, knuckles, or elbows. This pressure is maintained for about 10 seconds and then released. Pressure is then reapplied in a pumping action for a further 30 seconds. After treatment, the muscles are stretched and lengthened to enhance flexibility.

Though acupressure and trigger point therapy may sound similar, they actually operate on different parts of the body. Acupressure focuses on specific energy pathways in the body. Areas that are blocked are palpated in order to restore energy flow. The patient cannot feel these blockages under the skin. Trigger point therapy however, works on palpable knots in the muscles that are unrelated to energy pathways.

Trigger point therapy can be highly beneficial for fibromyalgia patients. Trigger point therapy is beneficial to fibromyalgia patients because it works to eliminate the tender points and the symptoms they cause. Trigger point therapy can reduce muscle stiffness, increase range of motion, increase flexibility, enhance circulation, allowing the body to heal, and ease depression and anxiety.

Hypnosis

Hypnosis is a non-invasive technique that encourages a person to achieve heightened levels of focus and sensation. People who practice hypnosis believe that there are two main components to the mind: the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. Through relaxation and suggestion, individuals are able to access their subconscious mind and stop behaviors or thoughts that may be contributing to pain or other unpleasant symptoms.

There are two main types of hypnosis techniques:

1. **Hypnosis Performed by a Clinical Hypnotist:** This type of hypnosis is performed in-office by a licensed professional. The hypnotist will explain what hypnosis is and how it works to reduce pain. He or she will then lead the patient into hypnosis through a series of relaxation exercises. Once they are in a hypnotic state, the hypnotist will make suggestions as to how they can change their thoughts or behavior in order to minimize their symptoms.
2. **Self Hypnosis:** Self hypnosis is a type of hypnosis that can be done by patients themselves in their own home. Self hypnosis can be learned either from a clinical hypnotist or from one of a number of books available on the subject. Self hypnosis techniques can be indispensable for fibromyalgia sufferers. Self hypnosis is usually used as a form of relaxation or meditation.

Many fibromyalgia sufferers attribute reduction in their symptoms to the power of hypnosis. Fibromyalgia sufferers often use hypnosis as a way to limit their pain symptoms and increase their energy and comfort level. A study conducted by the NIH showed that fibromyalgia sufferers undergoing hypnosis reported 80% fewer pain symptoms than those who received no hypnosis treatment. Other benefits of hypnosis include decreased muscle pain, decreased morning fatigue; fewer sleep difficulties, and increased relaxation.

Biofeedback therapy

Biofeedback therapy uses a machine to record electric impulses emitted by the patient's body, in the form of temperature, muscle twitches, and brainwaves. The biofeedback machine then "feeds back" these impulses to the patient in the form of lights and beeps, which are displayed on a biofeedback monitor. For example, when the patient's temperature increases, the numbers of beeps that he hears also increase. The object of the therapy is to find a way to reduce the number of lights and beeps that are fed back to him. This will relax his body's electrical impulses and reduce his symptoms. With training, he can eventually apply this knowledge without the use of a machine.

There are a number of different types of biofeedback therapy. They are often used together in order to achieve the best affect.

Electromyography (EMG)

EMG biofeedback is the most common type of biofeedback therapy and is especially useful for fibromyalgia patients. It is used to correct muscle pain and stiffness. A biofeedback device called electromyograph measures electricity given off by the muscles.

Peripheral Skin Temperature (PST)

This type of biofeedback measures electrical impulses given off by the flow of the patient's blood. This provides information about his skin temperature, which can be used to fight persistent cold or Reynaud's phenomenon.

Electroderm Response (EDR)

EDR monitors electricity produced by the patient's sweating reflexes, and is also known as sweating biofeedback. It is used to correct anxiety and depression.

Brainwave Electroencephalogram (EEG)

EEG biofeedback measures the type of waves that the brain produces. It is helpful in correcting all sorts of ailments, ranging from depression to sleep disorders.

Breathing Biofeedback

Breathing biofeedback gives information about the pulse rate and how fast the patient is breathing. It is used to help correct anxiety and fatigue.

Biofeedback has proven to be very effective in reducing symptoms of fibromyalgia syndrome. It helps to increase physical function, decrease tender points, minimize pain, decrease disordered sleep patterns. In one recent study, fibromyalgia patients who attended 15 biofeedback sessions experienced a decrease in their number of tender points, as well as improvements in their muscle stiffness and pain symptoms. These benefits lasted for up to six months.

Relaxation Therapy

Relaxation therapy helps to provide a person with physical, emotional, and spiritual relaxation. It actually involves numerous techniques that reduce stress and fatigue and work to invigorate the mind and body. Most relaxation techniques involve using both the body and the mind together; they often pair concentration with specific bodily movements or breathing exercise to achieve deep relaxation.

There are two main classes of relaxation therapy:

Brief Relaxation Therapy: Brief relaxation therapies require less time and skill to perform. They include: self-controlled relaxation, deep breathing and paced relaxation.

Deep Relaxation Therapy: Deep relaxation therapies take more time to learn and to perform, but can provide a more intense sense of relaxation. These therapies include: meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and autogenic training.

Relaxation Techniques

There are a wide variety of different techniques that can be used to help promote relaxation.

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing techniques require a person to focus on his inhalation and exhalation. This can be done by sitting or standing comfortably and placing the hands firmly on the stomach and then slowly inhaling through the nose. As a person inhales, his stomach begins to expand outwards - this is a sign that he is inhaling as much oxygen as possible. Repeating for 10 minutes, three or four times daily is vital.

Meditation

Meditation is a technique that helps to relax the body and settle the mind at the same time. Meditation uses focused concentration in order to achieve relaxation. Either by repeating a word or sound, or by focusing on breathing, sufferers can clear their mind and achieve complete relaxation. They concentrate on inhaling and exhaling or repeating a special word. This process is continued for about 20 minutes.

Yoga

Yoga is both a physical and mental practice that can help the patients to achieve complete relaxation. It is a low-impact workout, which focuses on stretching and relaxing all major muscle groups in the body. This makes yoga an excellent choice for fibromyalgia patients, as it helps to increase muscle mass and strength. Yoga relaxation therapy also teaches how to control and monitor breathing, allowing individuals to relax and focus as they complete the workout.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation is an excellent choice for fibromyalgia patients because it is so easy to do. Sufferers can do it while sitting in a chair or when lying in bed, whichever is the most comfortable for them. Progressive muscle relaxation works on all major muscle groups in the body. It helps to reduce tension and work out the muscles at the same time. Progressive muscle relaxation requires no equipment and can be done by all age-levels and abilities.

This technique reduces stress and tension by helping them to focus on particular muscles in their body. The ritual begins by tensing the muscles in the feet, holding this contraction for 8 seconds or so. Then releasing the tension and relaxing. Tensing of all the major muscles in the body, right up to the head is continued. By the time the ritual finishes, individuals are completely relaxed.



There are several known factors that patients can either avoid or emphasize to ensure that they reduce their cases of pain.

One of the most common fibromyalgia self help techniques that people can use is to eradicate stress. Most patients have confirmed that stress has always been a contributing factor to their fibromyalgia attacks.

Many relaxation therapy techniques can be performed at home, while others can be performed under the guidance of an instructor at a relaxation therapy clinic.

By relaxing both the physical body and the mind, an individual can actually help to reduce the effects of stress. This is known as the relaxation response. Relaxation helps to lower blood pressure and heart rate, and also helps to slow down breathing. Additionally, it promotes oxygen flow throughout the body, helping to heal damaged areas.

Relaxation therapy can also be extremely helpful in reducing the many symptoms caused by fibromyalgia. Meditation and progressive muscle relaxation techniques help to reduce insomnia and other sleep disorders. They promote the production of melatonin in the body, which is essential for deep sleep.

Relaxation therapy has also been proven to moderately reduce anxiety and depression, which are also symptoms of fibromyalgia. Moreover, all relaxation therapies have proven effective in minimizing the intensity and duration of migraine headaches.

A Simple Relaxation Technique You Could Try Today

1. Find a location that's quiet and where you know you won't be bothered. You are looking for ten to twenty minutes of undisturbed meditation here. Turn off all telephones and anything else that could become a distraction.
2. Now, sit comfortably and quietly. Keep your back in position with your spine vertically aligned. Remember that posture is something that you need to make happen.
3. Commit to what you are doing right now. That means not allowing distraction to play a role now. Commit to not being interrupted by anything happening in the world around you. Most importantly, remove anything from the room or from your line of view that could be a potential distraction. Commit to performing meditation.
4. Select a word that fits into your natural belief system. For example, use "love" "peace" or others. If you are religious, select a work of a short phrase that signifies what you believe. "Hallelujah" or "Om" make good choices. Close your eyes once you've selected the right word. Closing your eyes helps you to enter into relaxation.
5. Now, we'll go through the body and relax each of the muscles in it. Start with your toes. Consciously think to yourself that your toes should relax and feel them relax. Next, move to your feet, your legs and so on. You want to allow each of your muscles to relax. Make sure to include your neck, your jaw, your pelvis, back, your arms, fingers and hands, and shoulders. As this happens, feel the tension leave your body.

6. Continue to breathe through the process in deep, long breathes and repeat your mediation word over and over again. Breathe in, say your word, breathe out, and repeat. You don't need to say the word out loud, but rather mentally pronounce it.
7. Use the passive attitude that we've talked about. If any thoughts come into your mind while you are sitting, relaxing, let them go out simply by telling yourself "oh well." Most people will have trouble with this at first, so don't worry about how well you are doing. Just let go of those words the best that you can. Keep repeating your meditation word, too.
8. Keep this going for ten minutes at least and strive for twenty. Don't use any alarm to warn you, just open your eyes for a moment to check.
9. Sit and relax for several minutes once you've come out of your meditation. Keep your eyes closed for a couple of minutes before opening them. Don't stand up just yet. Allow yourself time to come back into reality before doing so.

You should try to do this simple meditation at least once a day but two or more times per day really can have a positive effect on your daily stresses. Many people find that this simple meditation works well before they get their day started, when they are fully rested and before they have eaten breakfast.

When you have practiced this type of mediation for several days or even longer, you should learn the benefits of meditation and what it can offer. If you don't feel any different, you may not be following each step appropriately. You need to focus on your body and breath and not on whether or not meditation is going to work or not.

There are many other types of mediation that can easily be used just like that of the simple meditation. Here, we'll talk about several other options that may fill your needs. Should you choose one?

After you have learned the basics of meditation you can begin to experiment with other sometimes more complicated methods.

Walking Meditation

One other type of meditation that you can easily incorporate into your daily lifestyle is that of Walking Meditation. The process seems much simpler than it is, but it's worth the try because it can allow you to enter into a new enlightenment no matter where you are.

Walking meditation does take practice so plan on giving it a few chances before you write it off as something that's not working for you.

Here's how walking meditation works.

Start by paying attention to your body as you walk. You should take note of the way it feels, not just walking but how it affects each part of your body. You should feel the ground hitting the bottom of your foot. You should feel the muscles in your legs and back tighten with each step that you take. Pay attention to these things.

Focus your attention, now on each of your feet. Start with just one foot. As it hits the ground, take notice of it. Feel the up and down movement of each foot separately, notice how it feels too. Continue to do this over and over again until it almost becomes a mantra that you are saying to yourself.

If your mind begins to wander off, force yourself to focus on your movements again. Your eyes should be watching in front of you, without really looking at anything in particular. Don't focus on anything else. This will help you to take your meditation to the next level of meditation.

Why should you use walking meditation? Its simple. When was the last time that you paid attention to the actually walking part of your movements?

You think about the countless things you have to do, where you are going and who's talking to you, but not the movements of walking itself, which can offer a high level of relaxation when focused on.

By concentrating on walking itself, you can better experience relaxation and the movements of walking itself. Through this, you can enter into a new awareness of the world around you and of your physical self.

Transcendental (TM) Meditation

If you have come to learn meditation, it is likely that you want to learn transcendental meditation or TM for short. There are many people that have set their sights on this type of meditation and with good reason.

First, it's easy to learn. Second, you can actually find countless benefits from this type of meditation.

Once you learn to practice Transcendental Meditation, you'll find results and benefits right away. Through a bit of practice, you could be doing this within a week or so, especially if you have practiced the other types of meditations prior to this.

During Transcendental Meditation, you will work closely with an instructor. This instructor not only will walk you through the process of entering into this type of meditation, but he or she will also provide you with a unique mantra to use during the process.

Remember that a mantra is a word or a few syllables of a word that you will say over and over again. In this type of meditation, your instructor will give you a specific mantra to say that is chosen specifically for you. This type of selection is based on your body's needs and your nervous system specifically.

Once you have been given this type of meditation mantra, you can then begin the process of meditation. You must promise not to tell anyone what your mantra is as that's part of the process.

From this point, you will sit down quietly and clear your mind of anything that is going through it. Then, you'll close your eyes gently and relax your muscles throughout your body, much like that of a simple meditation. From here, you'll begin repeating your mantra over and over again. The goal is to completely focus on those words.

When you do this, over and over again, you'll want to dispel any other thoughts that come into your mind. Clearing your mind and bring it back to the mantra is going to allow you to find benefits in meditation.

You should practice this type of meditation at least two times per day, every day.

In this type of meditation, your goal is to find an "oneness" with the universe. By repeating this one word or idea over and over again, you enter into a state of consciousness that is elevated. You are creating a one between you and the universe.

During the process, you'll use your passive attitude to easily dispel any distractions that come into your mind. Remember, when your mind wanders, a simple, "oh well" will allow you to come back to your mantra and therefore refocus your meditation exercises.

If you remember correctly from our earlier chapters, there are many benefits to Transcendental Meditation. If you will be practicing this type of meditation for any purpose, you should still clear your mind of all of those thoughts prior to getting started otherwise it may not actually work well for you.

You should also remember our information about Transcendental Meditation in how it relates to your health. This type of mediation is the most profound type of meditation in the way of relaxation and health and mental benefits.

Mindfulness Meditation

There is another type of meditation that should be mentioned because of its many benefits on your lifestyle as well as just how unique it is.

In the other meditations that we've selected to tell you about, your goal will be to use a mantra or a breathing focus to help you enter into a state of meditation. But, that's not necessarily the only method to do so. In Mindfulness Meditation, which is also known as Vipassana, you don't focus on something around you but rather on inside meditation.

In Mindfulness Meditation, you are not paying attention to the physical aspects of what is happening around you. Instead, you are focusing on what is happening in the present moment, not the future or the past. You will learn how to focus on what is happening right now, at this very second.

You'll find that the Mindfulness Meditation is one that can help to turn the brain down to low. If you are one that has constant thoughts racing through your head and often finds that there's just too much noise happening in your brain at any time, then this type of meditation may be one of the best types for you.

In Mindfulness Meditation, you will not focus on any one thing. You are not even going to look at this factor yet. Instead, you are going to concentrate on the quality of your awareness.

You will be what is called a "silent witness" which simply means that you need to be aware of what is happening around you at that very moment silently. You are witnessing what's happening around you.

Don't mistake this type of meditation for a mediation that allows you to be passive in what happens in your daily life. Rather, Mindfulness Meditation helps you to stop and make decisions based on reality rather than making impulse decisions.

So, how do you do Mindfulness Meditation? You may have heard of it before, actually. There are two ways to do it. One is informal. The other is formal and a good example of this is through Yoga.

Yoga works as a method of meditation because of the concentration that is paid to the here and now. You are mindful of the movements and positions of your body. Each movement is done slowly and carefully as planned.

You are fully aware of each move you are making and thus you are mindful. When you practice in this manner, you are mindfully aware of your feelings, your physical movements and what's happening in your mind.

You are taught through this type of meditation to allow breathing to enter into your body and then to leave your body taking with it your stress, your anxiety and other elements. Through methods like yoga, you can focus your attention on removing these toxins from your body and live a more mindful lifestyle.

The other type of Mindfulness Meditation is that of informal means. In the informal meditation, you take in the world around you through everything that you do. Each thing that you do or encounter is fully experienced in a very unique way.

For example, if you are hungry and grab an apple for a snack, you bite it, chew and swallow while probably watching television or even sitting on the web. But, when you use Mindfulness Meditation when you are consuming that apple, things change considerably.

Now, you are not just taking a bite. You are observing the apple in all ways. What does it feel like in your hand? What does the apple smell like? Take in its color and its weight. As you take a bite, hear the crunch of the apple's skin, the texture of the apple's inside and the way that the juices come out of the apple as you chew.

As you can see, with Mindfulness Meditation, you are fully aware of everything to do with the task at hand. It doesn't just have to do with your foods, either. The same goes for everything that you are doing.

Your hand on the mouse of your computer, the putting on of your shoes, and the movement of your pen on the paper are all activities that you can use Mindfulness Meditation on.

Why do this type of meditation in an informal way? When you do this type of activity, over and over again, you gain benefits of meditation at a basic level over and over again throughout your day. That means that you'll enter into a relaxed state often, probably dozens of times each day.

There Are More

One thing to take away from this book is the fact that there are many ways to enter into a state of meditation. Here are a few more examples of meditation methods that you can learn and practice for benefits.

Journey Meditation

In this type of meditation, you will take yourself to a new location through meditation. You gain meditation by taking yourself to a different location where peace is the focus of the trip.

To do this type of meditation, sit up in a proper posture yet comfortably. Keep some paper and pen near you so that you can write down anything that you worry about during this type of meditation. Breathe in slowly and deeply for about five counts to

cleanse your mind and thoughts. Then, find your peaceful place. It's generally a location that helps you to feel relaxed and at peace. Keep distractions out of your mind and enjoy the peace that's offered to you.

Sound Meditation

In this type of meditation, also known as vibrating meditation, you'll use the sound of your mantra to move you. Stand up while doing this type of meditation and allow deep breathing to cleanse your thoughts. Then, pick a word that sounds good and showcases peace for you. Repeat it over and over again, in a chant like method. Relax your muscles and enjoy what this method has to offer to you.

Even though we've covered many of the best types of meditation, especially for the beginner, there are plenty more. Make it your experience to learn more of them.

Cupping Therapy

Cupping Therapy uses glass cups applied to the skin to help relieve pain, flush out toxins, and restore healthy blood flow to the body. Using heat or a suction pump, a vacuum is created inside of each glass cup. These cups are then placed on various acupuncture points throughout the body and left for about ten minutes.

There are two main types of cupping:

- **Stationary Cupping:** During stationary cupping, each glass cup is left in one position on the skin. The glasses are not moved.
- **Massage Cupping:** During massage cupping, the glass cups are moved around the skin in a massage-like technique.

Regardless of the symptoms of pain or muscle stiffness, cupping is a great therapy. It provides numerous benefits including improved circulation and blood flow, toxin release, and faster healing of muscles, ligaments, and tendons.

It also works to reduce pain and soften stiff muscles and tissues. Cupping therapy is especially beneficial for people suffering from fibromyalgia. Cupping is a non-irritating type of treatment. It does not exacerbate the muscle pain in anyway, or compound any of the fibromyalgia symptoms. It is especially good for reducing trigger points, increasing muscle flexibility and range of motion, and decreasing anxiety and depression

Light Therapy

Light therapy is an alternative therapy used to help relieve a variety of physical illnesses, ranging from chronic pain to depression. Also known as phototherapy, light therapy delivers light beams to various areas of the body in order to trigger hormone release and healing. Practiced by physicians, physical therapists, and psychologists, light therapy uses bright, colored, and low-level forms of light to promote wellbeing.

There are three different light therapies.

Bright Light Therapy

Bright light therapy is the most commonly used form of light therapy. It is based on the idea that our body is specifically attuned to light. Known as the circadian rhythm, our body's sleep cycle, energy levels, and mood are all governed by changes in natural light. Bright light therapy uses high-powered fluorescent lights to help trigger the release of specific hormones which will help to restore the body's natural circadian rhythm and overall health.

Bright light therapy is typically performed using a light box. This is a small box containing dozens of full-spectrum, or white, light bulbs. This light box is placed in front of the patient, usually on a table at eye level. The patient remains seated in front of the box for anywhere between 15 minutes and three hours. During this time they do not stare at the light therapy box, but instead absorb the light while reading, eating, or engaging in other leisure activities.

Color Light Therapy

This form of phototherapy delivers colored beams of light to various body parts. When their eyes see this colored light, the light energy is converted into electric impulses. These impulses travel through the brain, triggering the release of particular hormones, including serotonin and endorphins. This helps to improve mood and ease pain.

Color therapy typically uses four main colors: red, blue, violet, and white. These colors can be applied directly to certain body parts, or they can be UV filtered and shone into the eyes. Color light therapy is very relaxing and typically lasts between 15 minutes and one hour.

Low Light Laser Therapy (LLLT)

Low laser light therapy involves the application of low-frequency laser light beams to various painful areas of the body. Also known as cold light therapy and soft laser light therapy, these low-level lasers produce no heat, and thus cause no damage to the skin or underlying tissues and organs.

Low laser light therapy helps to reduce pain and promote healing by increasing the energy levels of certain cells in the body. Low-level laser light emits photons that are absorbed by the body's cells. These photons are converted into cellular energy by the mitochondria (energy powerhouses) within the cells. This helps to increase the rate at which the body heals, eliminating pain.

Low laser light therapy is generally applied to specific areas of the body (painful areas or acupuncture points). Using a special laser wand, the patient's caregiver will apply the laser light to these areas for about 15 to 20 minutes. Pain relief can usually be felt immediately.

The side effects caused by light therapy tend to be minimal and temporary. The most common side effects include eye sensitivity and irritation. Mild nausea at the beginning of the light therapy sessions may be experienced. Some patients complain of becoming restless or over-stimulated by light therapy. Reducing the time spent in light therapy can help to eliminate this restlessness. Furthermore Light therapy is generally advised against those who suffer from:

- glaucoma, cataracts, or other eye diseases
- epilepsy

- skin sensitivities
- bipolar disorder

Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy uses water to help cure illness and maintain good health. Hydrotherapy makes use of water in a variety of different forms, including steam, and ice, in order to relieve muscle pain, increase circulation, and improve health. Also known as balneotherapy, hydrotherapy is practiced by licensed hydro-therapists, physical therapists, and naturopaths.

There are numerous types of hydrotherapy:

Icing

Icing uses ice cubes to help reduce inflammation, swelling, and pain. Ice cubes are wrapped in a plastic bag or towel and then applied to the affected body part. The ice pack is then held to the body for 20 minutes. This is repeated every two hours for one day.

Compresses

Cold, tepid, and hot compresses can be used to help relieve muscle and joint pain and to encourage circulation. A towel is soaked in water and the excess liquid is wrung out. The towel is then placed over the affected body part. Numerous towels can be layered on top of one another for better relief.

Baths

Baths are the most popular type of hydrotherapy. Cold soaks or hot water baths can be used to help provide symptom relief or to decrease stress. These baths are often performed in a whirlpool tub and may involve partial or complete submersion. Special herbs are often added to these baths to help with healing.

Hydrotherapy appears to be particularly effective for those suffering from fibromyalgia. In particular, hydrotherapy techniques help to:

- reduce muscle pain
- improve sleep disorders
- increase mobility
- reduce stiffness

A variety of studies involving fibromyalgia patients and hydrotherapy have been performed. In one study, fibromyalgia patients were given therapeutic whirlpool baths twice a week for six weeks. Upon conclusion of the study, the patients involved had better muscle and joint function, reduced pain symptoms, and improved sleep quality.

Though beneficial for many, hydrotherapy is not intended for everyone. Some people may exacerbate certain illnesses by participating in hydrotherapy. Consulting a health care provider before beginning hydrotherapy, and avoid these treatments if:

- you are pregnant
- you have diabetes
- you have severe osteoporosis
- you have a circulation disorder
- you have a heart condition

Low Frequency Sound Therapy

Low frequency sound therapy operates on the premise that low frequency sound actually has healing properties. Also known as infrasonic therapy (IST), low frequency sound is thought to travel through the body, directly stimulating the cells. Though these sounds do not register, the body does receive the sound wavelengths and responds to them by healing areas that are affected by swelling, inflammation, or chronic or acute pain.

Low frequency or infrasonic therapy is typically delivered in a hand-held or portable device. This device has a transducer that is very similar to that used in ultrasound technology. The transducer is simply run over various parts of the body in order to receive the healing benefits of the low frequency sound waves.

Low frequency sound therapy can also be delivered in specially designed chairs that are equipped with internal speaker systems. These systems deliver low frequency sound to the body while the patient is sitting in the chair. Both chair and hand-held systems often incorporate massage therapy in order to maximize the benefits of low frequency sound therapy.

Low frequency sound therapy helps to reduce the widespread pain associated with fibromyalgia. It also helps to increase overall mobility. Fibromyalgia sufferers may also find that symptoms of fatigue, stress, and sleep disorders are reduced by using low frequency sound therapy. Patients also experience periods of complete symptom relief when exposed to the low frequency sound therapy. This is because sound therapy is thought to be effective in reducing painful physical ailments by stimulating cell reproduction and other bodily changes. In particular, low frequency sound therapy is thought to increase the production of hyaluronic acid (HLA), which helps to lubricate joints and relieves muscle and joint pain and inflammation. Low frequency sound also stimulates cellular repair, helping to increase overall bodily health and stamina.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy refers to the practice of using scents to treat various psychological and physiological problems. It involves inhaling or applying essential oils, which have been extracted from plants, seeds, bark, and flowers. There are over 150 different essential oils, which can be used alone or in combination with each other, to help treat different illnesses and disorders.

Aromatherapy is believed to work by stimulating our sense of smell. Humans are capable of detecting over 10,000 different scents, and every scent causes our body to respond in a slightly different way. When we inhale scents, 15% of this inhaled air goes straight to our brain. It specifically affects the limbic system in our brain, which is responsible for controlling mood and emotions. Once activated by the scent, the limbic system releases hormones, causing us to experience a certain mood or emotion.

There are over 150 aromatherapy oils. Certain scents are purported to help certain conditions. These oils can be:

- inhaled directly from the bottle
- applied to the skin
- added to a bath
- dispersed around the room with an aromatherapy candle or aromatherapy oil burner

When applied directly to the skin, essential oils must be combined with a carrier oil, such as grape seed or sweet almond oil. This is because essential oils are very strong, and have the potential to aggravate or burn the skin. Essential oils should never be taken internally or applied to the eyes.

Certain aromatherapy oils are specifically recommended for fibromyalgia sufferers for example:

- lavender, chamomile, or jasmine (to help relax)
- lemon, grapefruit, or geranium (to help increase the energy)
- black pepper, eucalyptus, peppermint, or juniper (to ease sore joints and muscles)

Aromatherapy is becoming more and more popular amongst fibromyalgia sufferers. This is because of the effects that aromatherapy appears to have on pain sensation and mood.

In a recent study performed by Serge Marchand, a neuroscientist for the American Pain Society, the effectiveness of aromatherapy in reducing pain and improving mood was tested. The study involved 40 participants, both male and female, who were first asked to rate their mood and pain levels after inhaling ten different scents. The participants were then asked to dip their hands in hot water for three minutes. Every fifteen seconds, the participants were asked to inhale a smell and rate their pain levels and mood. The results showed a correlation between pleasant scents and increased mood levels in both male and female patients. Female patients also showed decreased pain scores when inhaling a pleasant scent.

Aromatherapy also seems to offer fibromyalgia patients:

- improved circulation
- increased pain tolerance

- improved mood
- sense of rejuvenation

Pet Relief

Smaller breeds of dogs have been effective in relieving common fibromyalgia symptoms, such as decreased energy levels and chronic pain. Dogs provide fibromyalgia patients with a sense of grounding when they are caught in fibro fog. Through their unconditional love, dogs encourage FMS patients to be more active, obtain better range of motion and better balance. Overall, fibromyalgia patients have found these dogs to give them a sense of security and independence they had never known before. These pets have given their owners the courage to tackle daily tasks and work with renewed vigor.

Studies have shown that chronically ill patients visited by dogs in the hospitals had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol, epinephrine, anxiety, and heart and lung pressure. Studies have also shown that petting a dog has a calming effect on all people, greatly facilitating human communication, learning and awareness. Pet therapy is used in hospitals, clinics and in schools for assisting the blind, deaf, physically disabled, people with Multiple Sclerosis, Alzheimer's, attention deficit disorder or epilepsy.

People with fibromyalgia who are mobility impaired would most benefit from service dogs. Service dogs are trained to run errands, like turning lights on and off, helping with the laundry, opening doors and retrieving medicine. Traditionally, Golden retrievers and Labrador retrievers are chosen as service dogs but any dog with the right temperament may be chosen for them.

Reflexology

Reflexology is a therapeutic technique in which pressure and massage are applied to specific spots on the feet and/or hands that match up to other places and organs throughout the body. A trained reflexologist will determine which spots to rub in order to provide patients with the targeted therapy, determined by their own needs, symptoms and types of pain.

Reflexology is not the same as standard massage therapy. While massage therapy concentrates on relieving pain and tension from muscles, reflexology works to heal the parts of the body, which cannot be touched from the outside by manipulating pressure points. This technique is similar to acupuncture and acupressure.

Reflexology can be done at home, using charts or special reflexology socks and gloves, to show the patients where the pressure points are. If a patient chooses to go this route, it would probably be beneficial to attend a workshop to learn how to do self reflexology effectively and what points to stimulate in order to obtain the maximum relief of his FMS symptoms.

However, a trained reflexologist might be the best option for those looking for specific types of pain relief and to obtain a more relaxing experience, especially for those who list anxiety as a symptom of their FMS. Many insurers will cover reflexology as a complimentary therapy for fibromyalgia

In one study of 10 fibromyalgia, sufferers who had reflexology treatments twice weekly for five weeks, researchers found definite improvement in the symptoms of all ten of the patients, with no side effects.

FMS patients who have undergone regular reflexology treatments report an improvement in:

- Mental clarity
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Fatigue
- Sleep disorders
- Depression
- Myofascial pain
- Tender point pain

Humor Therapy

Humor therapy, also known as therapeutic humor, can help to alleviate some of the most common fibromyalgia symptoms. Therapeutic humor uses the power of smiling and laughter to heal the body, both physically and mentally, by promoting overall relaxation. It is also sometimes incorporated with another form of alternative fibromyalgia therapy, yoga, and in this case referred to as laughter yoga. There are many health benefits that have been linked to humor therapy, including the following:

- reduced emotional stress
- reduced muscle tension
- improved breathing
- reduced blood pressure
- improved memory
- reduced anxiety

Humor therapy can help to treat a variety of illnesses, diseases and conditions, including

- anxiety disorders, including generalized anxiety disorders and obsessive compulsive disorder
- hypertension
- stress
- high blood pressure
- muscle tension
- cancer

Moreover, it has also been shown to boost the immune system by increasing the number and activity of natural killer cells that attack viral cells in the body as well as increase the production of antibodies. Therapeutic humor also decreases the production of stress hormones, such as cortisol, high levels of which can increase the chance of disease and other illness. In addition, humor therapy activities can help to resolve emotional problems by reducing negative emotions such as anger, fear and jealousy, which can be detrimental to an individual's mental health. In general, humor as therapy can help to improve the overall quality of an individual's life.

Environmental Therapy

Also known as environmental medicine, environmental therapy (previously known as clinical ecology) is the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses, diseases and other conditions that are caused due to environmental factors. Environmental therapists have identified several substances that can cause harmful reactions and disease in individuals. These substances include chemicals, pesticides, drugs, car exhaust, tobacco smoke, as well as food allergens. Other substances that can have an adverse effect on people's health include common allergens such as animal dander, dust, pollen and mold, as can different foods, such as dairy, corn syrup, meat, nuts and fruits and vegetables.

In order to determine whether environmental factors are either contributing to or causing health problems in an individual, an environmental therapist will perform blood, urine, stool and hair analysis tests.

Blood test such as liver function test, as the liver is the main organ that controls the removal of toxins from the body, zinc deficiency test as a zinc deficiency is usually indicative of metal poisoning or exposure to pesticides or environmental toxins (PCBs) and Allergy and hypersensitivity tests are performed.

Once the environmental causes of a condition or illness have been identified, the next step is to remove them from an individual's home and/or work place or to minimize the individual's exposure to them, as well as to improve the individual's overall physical and mental health.

Detoxification is central to environmental therapy and includes dietary therapy, exercise as well as dietary supplements. Supplementary treatment, such as traditional Chinese medicine and homeopathy, may also be prescribed.

Some side effects associated with environmental therapy are headaches, fatigue and aches and pain.

Because environmental stress can aggravate fibromyalgia symptoms, environmental medicine can be beneficial in minimizing common fibromyalgia symptoms, including the following:

- depression

- fatigue
- headaches
- insomnia

It can also help to minimize the effects of associated conditions of fibromyalgia, including irritable bowel syndrome and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Dance Therapy

Dance therapy is the therapeutic use of movement that aims to improve physical and mental health. Also known as movement therapy, dance therapy focuses on restoring a healthy mind-body connection through promoting health and healing.

Dance therapists conduct both individual sessions as well as group therapy sessions (i.e. for family members of an individual). A therapist will establish a dance program that is tailored to meet the individual's condition, which is reflected in the difficulty level of therapy sessions as well as the frequency of sessions. In addition, depending on their condition, some individuals may choose to take regular dance classes in order to improve their health.

Dance therapy proves to be beneficial and is supposed to increase mobility, flexibility, coordination and decrease muscle tension. Movement therapy also improves the health of the circulatory, respiratory, muscular and skeletal systems. While there is a lack of scientific evidence thus far to support these claims, supporters of dance therapy believe that dance therapy strengthens the immune system through muscular activity as well as through physiological processes, thereby reducing fibromyalgia pain.

Magnet Therapy

Magnet therapy is a form of alternative treatment that uses the energy and electrical currents of magnets in order to promote overall physical and mental healing through the stimulation of cells.

Magnet therapy can range from treatment sessions using specialized electromagnetic equipment in a hospital setting to using magnetic devices such as magnetic mattresses, pillows and jewelry for everyday living therapy.

Magnet therapy is believed to help a variety of conditions and diseases - many of which are linked to fibromyalgia - including the following:

- widespread pain and chronic back pain
- arthritis
- cancer
- muscle tension
- depression

Fibromyalgia Treatment: Emu Oil

Emu oil is derived from the fat of the emu, a large bird that is native to Australia. It is comprised of oleic acid (a mono-saturated fatty acid), linoleic acid (omega 6), and linolenic acid (omega 3)

Linolenic acid is known to temporarily ease discomfort associated with muscle and joint pain, making it particularly useful for individuals suffering from fibromyalgia symptoms. Emu oil also lacks phospholipids which gives it highly penetrating qualities when applied to the surface of the skin. It is considered to be non-comedogenic meaning that it does not clog the pores, allowing for quick and deep penetration of the skin in order to target specific areas

There are a variety of products available that incorporate emu oil along with other beneficial ingredients for the treatment of fibromyalgia symptoms. Some individuals with fibromyalgia use emu oil as part of an all-body massage to reduce pain symptoms. Emu oil is also available in oral capsule form. These are often combined with Glucosamine and Chondroitin and are used to treat inflammation. However, pure emu oil has not yet been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. It is recommended that patients try using different types of emu oil products in order to learn which type of treatment best helps to treat fibromyalgia symptoms.

Emu oil is a natural anti-inflammatory treatment that has been used to relieve some of the symptoms of fibromyalgia. It has long been used for the treatment of arthritis, muscle and joint pain, skin conditions and for the treatment of burn victims to minimize the appearance of scarring. Other known symptoms of fibromyalgia that emu oil may help alleviate include headaches including sinus headaches, carpal tunnel syndrome, dry skin and skin rashes, eye irritation, hair loss, muscle spasms, sprains, shingles, muscle soreness, tired feet, varicose veins, wounds, and vulvodynia.

Chelation Therapy

Chelation therapy is based on the concept that when an amino acid complex known as EDTA (ethylene-diamine-tetra-acetic acid) comes into contact with positively charged metals and other substances, it will bind these toxins and remove them from the body. When EDTA binds to toxins, a stable compound will be formed that will then be excreted from the system.

While synthetic amino acids are used in chelation therapy, the process actually takes place naturally in our bodies. For instance, during digestion, amino acids will naturally bind to minerals such as iron in order to transport them to other parts of the body where they will be released.

Chelation therapy for fibromyalgia treatment can help eliminate built-up ionic substances such as lead, iron, calcium, magnesium, zinc, plutonium and manganese.

Prior to receiving chelation therapy for fibromyalgia treatment, patients will likely undergo a series of medical examinations. They may be asked questions about their lifestyle including diet, emotional status and stress levels. They will be given a physical examination and other medical tests such as x-rays or blood tests may be performed.

Chelation fibromyalgia treatment typically involves a blood infusion of EDTA. However, in some cases EDTA may be administered orally. In addition, organic complexes other than EDTA may be infused. EDTA infusion requires a series of treatments of up to 20 to 30 sessions, scheduled two to three times a week. A needle is inserted into a vein in the hand, arm or leg, and the EDTA fluid is drip fed into the body for approximately three and half hours. Additional minerals or supplements that may be infused along with EDTA may include B vitamins, vitamin C, magnesium and heparin (to prevent clotting) these.

Fibromyalgia patients who opt for chelation therapy should take into consideration that the body is likely to be chemically addicted to the substances that will be eliminated. For this reason, chelation therapy often result in short term withdrawal symptoms as the body begins to build up its natural immunity. A patient may actually experience worse symptoms following fibromyalgia treatment; however, this stage should pass quickly.

Side effects associated with this alternative fibromyalgia treatment can include the following:

- headaches due to low blood sugar
- local skin irritation due to zinc or vitamin B6 deficiency
- nausea or upset stomach due to vitamin B6 deficiency
- diarrhea
- feeling faint due to low blood pressure
- extreme fatigue due to nutrient deficiency
- fever
- cramps, especially at night
- joint pain

Ensuring that the patient receives sufficient levels of nutrients while undergoing chelation, fibromyalgia treatment can help reduce these symptoms.

Chelation therapy for fibromyalgia treatment may help reduce symptoms including:

- fatigue
- neurological symptoms
- cardiovascular symptoms
- respiratory problems
- urinary problems
- gastrointestinal symptoms

Music Therapy

Music therapy is an established form of treatment that can be a valuable resource in restoring quality of life for fibromyalgia patients. Studies show that music therapy alleviates pain, promotes physical rehabilitation, can create a feeling of wellbeing, and aids in managing stress. In music therapy, an accredited music therapist will assess the needs of the client and create an individualized treatment plan which might include singing, listening, composing, and moving to music. Clients find strength in their musical abilities and this ability then carries over to other areas of their lives.

Patients need not be musical in order to partake of the benefits of music therapy and there is no one kind of music that has specific beneficial effects. The type of music to be used in therapy is determined by the board certified music therapist. While it's best to visit a qualified therapist, there are recorded versions of what is known as prescriptive music, or music that consists of 50-60 beats a minute. This type of music can lower blood pressure and heart rates and even reduce pain.

Affective Self-Awareness

A small clinical trial has found that one type of mind-body therapy can offer relief to sufferers of fibromyalgia. The research study included 45 female fibromyalgia patients who were taught a technique known as "affective self-awareness." The researchers discovered that the participants receiving this therapy experienced a significant reduction in pain over the course of a six month period.

Affective self-awareness techniques involve educating the patient about the link between emotions and pain. The patients are taught to express their emotions in writing so that they might learn which emotions bring on the pain. They also learn mindfulness meditation. If the pain has prevented the patient from exercising, the patient will be given gentle encouragement to get back in the saddle.

CHAPTER 6

Fibromyalgia & Your Diet

In 2001 an observational study was conducted to determine whether the effects of fibromyalgia syndrome may be improved with the use of a mostly raw vegetarian diet. The results were very encouraging and seem to indicate that such a diet can produce favorable results in relieving the symptoms in sufferers of fibromyalgia.

There have been other studies using a vegetarian dietary intervention of fibromyalgia which have also indicated the same general outcome as this particular study. There was an increase in well-being and improved quality of life with significant improvements in pain scores, less stiffness and an ability to go through the day feeling better. Because a raw diet is different and can be a bit more difficult to implement, the participants did not remain on the special diet after the study and reverted back to their former methods of lifestyle. Symptoms returned upon the resumption of their former diet.

Dietary guidelines for fibromyalgia patients may not suit all fibromyalgia sufferers. This is because symptoms of FM can vary considerably from one patient to another. For instance, some fibromyalgia patients benefit from a healthy low carbohydrate eating plan, (which is typically high in protein), while others cannot tolerate increased amounts of protein. As a result, it is recommended to refer to a nutritionist in order to achieve the best results.

Possible Dietary Methods to Improve Fibromyalgia

Some experts advocate various elimination diets to identify and avoid certain foods which may aggravate an individual's fibromyalgia condition. Other medical experts believe that central sensitization is a key factor and recommend a fibromyalgia diet without monosodium glutamate and aspartame, as they over stimulate the central nervous system's pain transmission function. here is a selection of various other approaches to relieving pain, fatigue, headaches and other symptoms of fibromyalgia.

Low Refined-Carb Diet

Many fibromyalgia sufferers claim to feel better when heavily refined sugar foods and drinks are eliminated from the diet. This is because heavily processed or refined carbs which are typically high in white flour or sugar - aggravate food cravings and fatigue by causing "spikes" or sudden surges in blood glucose levels. High blood sugar (hyperglycemia) leads to high levels of insulin in the bloodstream and can, over a period of years, lead to prediabetes, insulin resistance and full-blown type 2 diabetes. The best way to control cravings and fatigue in this way is to follow a low GI diet. These low GI diets recommend eating wholegrain carbohydrates with a low GI value.

Vegetarian Diet

Research into vegan diets has demonstrated benefits for fibromyalgia patients, although the evidence is not conclusive. For example, one study revealed greater improvements in pain, sleeping habits and general health assessment for subjects following a low salt vegan diet, compared to a regular diet. However, another study into dietary treatment of fibromyalgia revealed less pain reduction when eating a vegetarian diet, compared to other subjects who took amitriptyline (a tricyclic pain medication/antidepressant). Also, at least one study shows that improvements in fibromyalgia when following a raw pure vegetarian diet are only temporary.

Diet to Reduce Headaches

Patients with fibromyalgia who experience headache or migraine attacks can alleviate symptoms by following these dietary guidelines. First, avoid the main "trigger foods" for headaches, including: chocolate, cheese, citrus fruits and caffeine. Other migraine inducing foods include: red wine, port, aspartame and ice cream. Second, do not go without food for more than 3-4 hours. This tends to lead to low blood sugar levels, which can cause headaches. Eating small, regular meals is a good preventative measure. Third, avoid dehydration by drinking plenty of liquids.

Fibromyalgia And Hormones

Because symptoms occur mainly in women, some experts consider it a possibility that fibromyalgia may have a hormonal link. At present, there is little evidence that hormones are responsible, although a new study is being prepared using subjects taken from the group of fibromyalgia patients who participate in a 1.5 day multidisciplinary fibromyalgia outpatient program at Mayo Clinic/Rochester. The main aim of the study is to gather preliminary data on whether dietary supplements of soy can improve the quality of life in patients with fibromyalgia as assessed by the Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire (FIQ) and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). The study proposes to test the hypothesis that soy supplementation (the soy supplement is Revival Soy) helps to reduce pain and raise quality of life in sufferers of fibromyalgia. The study will be conducted as a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial.

Garlic

Increased usage of garlic, fresh or powdered form, in foods or as a supplement has shown to relieve inflammation, eradicate the bugs that can bring on colds and flu, stomach viruses, yeast infections, tuberculosis, and botulism. The herb has also been demonstrated to reduce levels of the chemical that make our body friendly to certain viruses, such as HIV. Using garlic can therefore result in a lower viral load. Garlic is also known to promote good heart health and may also lower the risks for certain cancers.

Enzymes

People with fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue syndromes that have started a digestive enzyme regime often show and improvement in their symptoms. This is because the regimen provides enzymes that the body lacks, and promotes cell nutrition by nourishing the nervous system and digestive system.

A number of enzyme formulations have successfully been used in people with Chronic Fatigue and/or Fibromyalgia Syndromes. A few of these enzyme formulations include:

OxiCellZyme: Contains a wide range of digestive enzymes to allow normal food consumption. It also contains the enzyme protease to help break down excess protein. Two capsules are taken with every meal.

DigestZyme: Assists with digestion and helps maintain acid/alkaline pH balance. One or two capsules are taken with every meal.

PureZyme: Contains a high concentration of the enzyme proteases. It helps break down protein and controls bacteria and inflammation in the digestive tract. Four capsules, twice a day are taken on an empty stomach.

Enzyme supplements and a good diet can help Fibromyalgia patients maintain energy for cell growth and as well as strengthen their immune system. People with fibromyalgia often display irregular nervous systems and a thickening of the myofascia tissue.

Research shows that many patients have difficulties breaking down carbohydrates because they don't have amylase—the natural enzyme produced by our body. Amylase enzymes are needed to break down carbohydrates. Similarly, many patients also show a lipase deficiency. Lipase enzymes work to break down fats. Therefore, without the proper enzymes needed to break down carbohydrates and fats and proteins, a person with fibromyalgia may compromise their immune system and digestive system.

Digestive System Cleanse

digestive system cleanse is a process through which to cleanse the body of toxins while increasing overall nutritional intake so as to minimize stress on the digestive system and the colon while promoting self-healing through the strengthening of the immune system.

Nutritionists or digestive cleanse specialists instruct patients as to which system of colon cleansing is best for them.

During the initial consultation, the nutritionist or colon cleanse specialist establishes which foods interfere with the body's digestive and circulatory processes. This provides the basis for establishing the foods that constitute the digestive cleanse diet and

therefore creates a specialized meal plan tailored to meet the patient's unique nutritional requirements. In addition, the health care provider gives instructions on how to prepare meals so that individuals can successfully follow their colon diet at home. A colon cleanse diet features a high intake of vegetables and fruits as well as foods that are high in fiber. Ten to twelve glasses of water are encouraged, while liquids such as coffee, tea and soft drinks are not. Healthy fruit and vegetable juices that are free of sugar and preservatives are also recommended.

Herbs that promote proper digestion may also be recommended; such herbal supplements include cayenne pepper, fennel, lemon balm and golden seal, all of which contain soothing properties that aid the digestive process. Mild, natural laxatives such as flax seed, aloe vera and senna leaves also promote digestion while a vitamin supplement can help to ensure the individual to meet his daily nutritional needs. Generally, a cleanse will last from 5 to 21 days, depending on the health care provider's recommendations.

Excessive levels of toxins and allergens in the body are believed to be one of the causes of fibromyalgia syndrome.

Therefore, the benefits of a colon cleanse diet are many for individuals seeking fibromyalgia treatment in order to reduce their fibromyalgia symptoms. A healthy diet is important to reducing the buildup of toxins and allergens in the body. A cleanse also helps to reduce stress placed on the nervous system, an imbalance which also contributes to fibromyalgia.

In addition, colon cleansing improves overall immune system health and promotes a better overall lifestyle, particularly when used in conjunction with other alternative fibromyalgia therapies like meditation and massage in conjunction with proper amounts of sleep and moderate exercise.

Therefore, a colon cleanse can be a beneficial fibromyalgia diet that helps to improve quality of life as well as fibromyalgia symptoms like fatigue and fibro fog.

Glucosamine and Chondroitin

Glucosamine, also known as glucosamine sulfate, is being used more and more to help control joint pain and cartilage damage. Glucosamine is actually produced naturally by our bodies. It is made from glucose, a sugar found inside our blood, and from an amino acid called glutamine. Glucosamine lives inside cells throughout our body, particularly in the cells that make up our joints and cartilage. Glucosamine works to keep our cartilage healthy, preventing our joints from breaking down. It also acts as a building block for our body to create new cartilage cells.

Chondroitin is also produced naturally by our body. Referred to as chondroitin sulfate, chondroitin is an amino acid found inside of our joint cartilage. It helps to keep our joints lubricated by attracting and absorbing water. Additionally, it works against

inflammation, reducing pain symptoms. Unfortunately, chondroitin declines as we age, resulting in joint stiffness and weakness.

Glucosamine and chondroitin are typically taken in the form of nutritional supplements. Usually taken together, never the less both glucosamine and chondroitin can be also be taken individually, with excellent results.

Glucosamine supplements are made of crab, lobster, and shrimp cells, while chondroitin supplements are created from animal cartilage, particularly shark cartilage. It is important to consult a health care provider before taking glucosamine, chondroitin, or any other type of nutritional supplement. These therapies do cause side effects and sometimes react dangerously with other types of medications.

Studies have shown that the most effective dosage of glucosamine is around 1500mg per day. However, dosage does depend upon the height and weight. If the weight is less than 100 pounds, consuming only 1000mg a day should be considered. Chondroitin is also taken daily, in 1200mg caplets.

Here are some side effects associated with regular use of glucosamine and chondroitin. The most common side effects include:

- intestinal gas
- soft stools
- nausea
- diarrhea

BACH FLOWER REMEDIES

Bach Flower Remedies are named after Edward Bach, a highly respected English doctor. Bach Flower Remedies are medicines used to balance negative mental states and emotions. Each remedy treats a specific negative emotional state by encouraging the corresponding positive quality that lies dormant within us. These remedies are intended for home self-help, and they are meant to treat the whole person. Stock solutions are diluted in water and a few drops are taken. They work very gently and they do no harm. They do not cause dramatic healing crises but instead slowly unpeel the emotional layers one at a time. This process is called "peeling the onion". They are considered safe for pregnant women and small babies.

Dr. Bach came up with 38 remedies which come from the flowering parts of plants, bushes and trees. They are liquid so that they can be mixed together, which gives a 293 million possible combination, enough to treat every possible negative mental state. Some of them are

Gentian - for a mild sense of despondency when something has gone wrong and we feel like giving up;

Gorse - for a deeper form of depression, when we have given up hope and made up our minds that things will not improve;

Sweet Chestnut - for a deep despair when we feel that there is no way out of our difficulties;
Oak - for slow, steady, reliable people who never know when they are beaten;
Mustard - when we feel unhappy, gloomy and depressed but there is no reason to justify these feelings;
Willow - for self-pity and resentment, everything is someone else's fault.

Other depression remedies: Agrimony, Chicory, Crab Apple, Elm, Honeysuckle, Pine, Star of Bethlehem

For Fear, Anxiety and Worry

White Chestnut - calms repetitive, worrying thoughts;
Larch - for people who fear and expect failure;
Agrimony - for people who worry in secret but hide from their fears by making a joke of things.

Other Fear and Worry remedies: Vervain, Chicory, Gorse, Elm, Cerato, Impatient, Centaury, Walnut.

Rescue Remedy - the crisis and emergency remedy, and the flower remedy equivalent of a first-aid kit when there is no time to consider other remedy choices. It contains five single remedies: Rock Rose, Clematis, Impatient, Star of Bethlehem and Cherry Plum.

Rescue Cream - for bruises, bumps, scratches and different external trauma;
Rock Rose - for extreme fear and terror; Sweet Chestnut - for great anguish and suffering;
Star of Bethlehem - helps to cope with shock, loss and grief;
Olive - gives rest and new energy when we over-extend ourselves physically, emotionally or mentally;
Chestnut Bud - helps us learn from our and other peoples mistakes in order not to repeat them; Walnut - helps in times of change and whenever we need protection against outside influences.
Walnut - helps us to move ahead on our own path;

HOW TO SELECT BACH FLOWER REMEDIES

- 1) Find a trained flower essence consultant who will make a recommendation
- 2) Muscle-testing (Kinesiology);
- 3) Dowsing or intuition;
- 4) Find reference books about flower essences;

MIXING AND TAKING REMEDIES

The recommendation for every day purposes is to take no more than six or seven remedies at the same time. Rescue Remedy counts as one remedy.

There are two basic methods that can be used to mix remedies.

For *passing moods* select ones you want to take, than in a glass of water add two drops of each remedy. Sip from the glass at intervals until the mood has passed. In an emergency you might take a sip every few seconds and later a couple of sips during the evening.

For *long term problems* you can use a glass of water method. Make up a fresh glass each morning. Sip from the glass four times a day - in the morning, in the evening and two more times during the day.

You can also make up a *treatment bottle*. In an empty 30 ml or 1 oz dropper bottle put two drops of each selected remedy and a double dose of Rescue Remedy (if you need it), than top the bottle with non-fizzy bottled mineral water. Shake the content a little bit. Take four drops directly on the tongue at least four times a day. Four drops are the minimum dose. If you take less it reduces the effectiveness of the remedies. A 30 ml treatment bottle will last up to three weeks.

CHAPTER 7

How To Get The Fibromyalgia Diet Recipe Work For You

Fibromyalgia is considered a chronic ailment that involves having to endure pain that aches and is generalized by nature. There are believed to be well over three million Americans that are fibromyalgia sufferers which in other words mean that about five percent of the US population suffers from fibromyalgia, which again occurs mostly in women that are in the childbearing age group. Not much is known about the exact causes of fibromyalgia though a good diet is believed to be an important weapon which can help provide relief from fibromyalgia symptoms.

This means that if you are serious about using diet to control your fibromyalgia symptoms it will pay for you to learn about a few choice fibromyalgia diet recipes. What's more, once you come across a good fibromyalgia diet recipe you must then learn about what the food dish that you prepare must do in order for you to get relief from the symptoms of fibromyalgia.

In any case, your fibromyalgia diet recipe must be one that should compel you to dish up enough food to ensure that you are able to eat well and furthermore the recipe must lay emphasis on ingredients that are natural and organic such as fruits and vegetables as well as whole grains – all of which should be organic so that they are able to suitably buttress your body's defenses against fibromyalgia.

Another aspect of using a good fibromyalgia diet recipe is that none of the ingredients used in the recipe should be polyunsaturated oils (vegetable), margarine or vegetable shortening.

In fact, the fibromyalgia diet recipe should use as much of omega 3 fatty acids as possible and it should also include plenty of ginger as well as turmeric.

In addition to the foods that you create with the help of a good fibromyalgia diet recipe you must also take plenty of supplements. And, to make your fibromyalgia diet recipe work for you it is also necessary to make changes to your lifestyle so that not only do you learn to lower stress (a cause of fibromyalgia) but it also ensures that you live a healthier life and so reduce the risk from all kinds of ailments including fibromyalgia.

There are in fact seven fibromyalgia diet foods that you must learn to avoid. Though there is no scientific evidence that shows that a single fibromyalgia diet plan will help in every case, there also is no denying the fact that the right diet will help you get much needed relief from the symptoms and all that you need to do is eat the right kind of foods and abstain from the wrong kinds of foods.

CHAPTER 8

Delicious Fibromyalgia Friendly Recipes

In the next pages I've included super easy and delicious recipes that anyone can cook easily.

Feel free to experiment and play around with the ingredients within the restrictions and you won't feel any difference between your current and new diet.

Sweet and Healthy Pancakes

2/3 cup of soy flour

1 cup of fat free milk

1 egg white

1 tablespoon of olive oil

1 teaspoon of Vanilla extract

Mix soy flour, egg white, milk, and vanilla extract in a mixing bowl. Heat up olive oil in a large non-stick skillet. Pour entire one serving batter into the non-stick skillet and cook until golden brown on both sides.

You can eat these alone, or you can combine them by eating soy protein sausages along with a few blueberries.

Delicious Ground Hamburger Patties

3 ounces of Round Steak

2 egg whites

1/2 tablespoon of olive oil

Serve with a 1/2 cup of whole oat groats and 1/4 cup of light fruit.

Trim the fat off of the round steak. Put the round steak into your grinder - making your own ground beef. Season your ground beef and egg whites. Heat up frying pan with olive oil. (You can actually add really tiny pieces of round onions and caramelize them in the olive oil, if you want more flavor). Cook the ground beef until brown. Add 2 egg whites on the top of the ground beef. When egg whites are cooked, eat with groats and light fruit.

Orient Express Chicken Stir Fry

3 ounces of Chicken Breast

1/2 cup of onions

1/2 cup of Red Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Green Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Yellow Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of mushrooms

1/4 cup of zucchini

1 1/2 tablespoons of olive oil

Trim any fat off of the chicken breast and cut them into one inch pieces. Cut onions and all bell peppers into tiny fine squares. Cut zucchini up into 3/4 inch squares. Season with Mrs. Dash or you can add your own flavor. Heat up frying pan with olive oil. Sautee onions and all bell peppers in frying pan. Then add zucchini 2 minutes later. Then add mushrooms and chicken breast 1 minute after. Cook until Chicken breast is properly browned.

Hear Warming Southern Style Beef Stew

4 ounces of Eye of Round Steak

1/4 cup of onions

1/2 cup of String Beans

1/2 cup of Celery

1/2 cup of Green Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Red Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Yellow Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Tomatoes

2 minced garlic cloves

Dash of dried marjoram

Dash of dried basil

1 bay leaf

2 tablespoons of olive oil

2 cups of Beef Broth (can be homemade if you want to avoid the salt)

Trim any visible fat off of the eye of round steak cut them into small cubes. Cut onions and all bell peppers into tiny fine squares. Season with Mrs. Dash or you can add your own flavor. Heat up cooking pot with olive oil. Sautee onions, celery, all bell peppers, and garlic gloves for 5 minutes.

Add meat - cook until it's browned. Add tomatoes, string beans, marjoram, basil, and bay leaf. Then add beef broth. Cook until ready

Babushka's Stuffed Cabbage

3 ounces of Round Steak

3 egg whites 1/2 cup of onions

1/2 cup of tomato sauce

1/4 cup of Whole Oat Groats

2 cabbage leaves

1 tablespoon of olive oil

Cook whole oat groats in a rice cooker. Trim the fat off of the round steak and grind in a homemade grinder. Mix raw hamburger and egg whites in a bowl. Finely cut the onions and sauté in a separate pan using the olive oil.

Season with Mrs. Dash or you can add your own flavor.

Mix tomato sauce into onions. In a separate bowl, microwave cabbage in water until soft. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Form two large meat loafs using the raw hamburger and place the whole oat groats in the middle.

Wrap with cabbage. Place in pot and pour tomato sauce and onions over. Cover and bake for about 2 hours.

Chocolate Fudge Indulgence

2 teaspoons fructose

1 teaspoon of water

1 cup of skim milk

1 tablespoon peanut butter

1 scoop of chocolate whey protein powder

2 macadamia nuts chopped

Mix fructose and water together and cook in the microwave oven until it boils. Mix peanut butter with fructose and water and cook again until it boils. Then add protein powder and milk to the mix. Place in a cup and refrigerate.

French Style Cheese Omelette

1 ounce of deli ham

4 egg whites

1 slice American fat free cheese

1/2 cup of onions

1/2 cup of Green Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Red Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of Yellow Bell Peppers

1/2 cup of String Beans

2 tablespoons of olive oil

Sprinkle of celery salt

Sprinkle of chili pepper

Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a nonstick pan, then sauté onions. Add bell peppers and string beans. Sprinkle with seasoning. Then add ham.

In a second non stick pan, heat another tablespoon of olive oil. Add eggs whites. Cook until an omlette forms. Fill omlette with vegetables and American cheese, then fold over.

Sizzling Stuffed Bell Peppers

3 ounces of Round Steak

3 egg whites

1/2 cup of onions

1/2 cup of tomato sauce

1/4 cup of Whole Oat Groats

2 Green Bell Peppers

1 tablespoon of olive oil

Cook whole oat groats in a rice cooker. Trim the fat off of the round steak and grind in a homemade grinder. Mix raw hamburger and egg whites in a bowl. Finely cut the onions and sauté in a separate pan using the olive oil.

Season with Mrs. Dash or you can add your own flavor. Mix tomato sauce into onions. In another separate bowl, microwave bell peppers until soft. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Form two large meat loafs using the raw hamburger and place the whole oat groats in the middle. Stuff in Bell Peppers.

Place in pot and pour tomato sauce and onions over. Cover and bake for about 2 hours.

Beef and Broccoli Feast

5 ounces of round steak

20 pieces of broccoli florets

1 tablespoon cornstarch

1/4 cup dry sherry

1/4 cup sesame oil

1/4 cup soy sauce

1/4 teaspoon of fructose

1/8 teaspoon of minced garlic

1/8 teaspoon of grated ginger

2 tablespoons of olive oil

In a bowl of water, microwave broccoli florets until boiling, then drain. Cut round steak into strips of meat. In a cooking pot, heat olive oil. Add the raw meat to the pot along with the ginger and garlic.

Cook meat until brown. Add sherry, sesame oil, soy sauce, and fructose and mix. Then add broccoli florets. Cook for another 10 minutes.

Chapter 9

In Conclusion

Fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) is a chronic condition that causes immense pain and fatigue. Although it has many treatments, it has no cure as yet. Fibromyalgia causes pain in the tissues around the skin, joints and organs, showing symptoms such as tautness in the joints, nauseating headaches and facial soreness causing temperature and light sensitivity, tiredness and insomnia, bowel discomfort, paresthesia, skin problems and general numbness in the fingers and feet only adding to the distress.

Even though Fibromyalgia has no known decisive causes, vast research has been done which has led to several conclusions. Firstly, it is believed that there is a higher possibility of the development of Fibromyalgia syndrome after a physical trauma, usually after neck injuries, which affect the nervous system.

Secondly, Fibromyalgia syndrome could very well be inherited, as indicated by research, and is typically received from the female side. Moreover, depression is thought to be linked with Fibromyalgia. Magnetic resonance imaging of patients suffering from fibromyalgia has revealed its association with it.

Furthermore, another theory suggests that Fibromyalgia syndrome is an illness occurring due to a disturbed emotional or mental state. Other tests reveal a deficiency of neurotransmitter serotonin, which diminishes the pain signal's intensity. But still, a certain level of ambiguity on the cause of Fibromyalgia prevails.

Likewise, Fibromyalgia syndrome was thought to be a discrete medical condition, but new research concludes otherwise. Fibromyalgia syndrome is believed to mingle with other conditions and is thought to be a group of various systemic illnesses, as indicated by Dr Muhammad Yunus, M.D.

Extensive Research has succeeded in figuring out eighteen tender points on the body which ache in fibromyalgia. A diagnostic criterion has been established in order to diagnose Fibromyalgia. In order to diagnose someone with fibromyalgia, firstly, there should be widespread pain in the whole body for three months or more. Secondly, at least eleven out of eighteen tender points should hurt and the patient should indicate these tender points. Lastly, extensive tests like x-rays etcetera should be performed and medical history and physical examinations are a crucial in order to prevent misdiagnoses so that appropriate treatments could commence.

The treatment of Fibromyalgia is rather complicated. Fibromyalgia can be treated in two ways, by following western medicinal treatment or with alternative medicine like Naturopathic treatment.

Western treatment mainly consists of anti depressants that lift the mood like Tricyclic antidepressants, Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors and Serotonin Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors like duloxetine and venlafaxine that are similar to tricyclic anti depressants, and mixed reuptake inhibitors like Savella, and Cymbalta, which is a mixture of the three. Among others Savella proves to be very promising in treating depression.

Tricyclic antidepressants decrease the rate of breakdown of serotonin and norepinephrine, chemicals that transmit messages about pain and emotion in the brain, thus leading to an enhanced mood. Other anti depressants like Serotonin Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors and Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors work in a similar way by attacking different chemicals in the brain. These supposedly improve sleep pattern of the user enabling him to sleep peacefully and help brighten the depressed mood.

Tricyclic antidepressants have side effects which include mouth dryness, vision problems and low blood pressures. Nausea, weight gain, anxiety, loss of sex drive, and headaches are the side effects of using Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors and the side effects of using this antidepressant medication include nausea, indigestion, sexual dysfunction, and light headedness. These drugs are not recommended for patients suffering from glaucoma and heart diseases.

Benzodiazepine is another drug that is used to treat fibromyalgia. It stabilizes the brain waves leading to a better quality of sleep and it relaxes the muscles, easing pain. It is prescribed as a last resort when treating fibromyalgia due to its addictive properties.

Another common medication is the use of Analgesics, pain killers that range from over the counter medicines to prescription drugs. They are responsible for easing the pain and fatigue of the fibromyalgia patients. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like aspirin and ibuprofen are used to treat inflammation and they also act as a pain killer reducing the intensity of headaches and other forms of soreness.

As a therapeutic treatment, Cognitive behavior therapy comprises of cognitive therapy which eliminates the effects thoughts have on the symptoms of fibromyalgia, and behavior therapy which helps change behavior that causes the symptoms. When used together, the patient is taught how to deal with feelings that worsen the symptoms of fibromyalgia, which reduces the overall pain experienced by the patients.

A slightly difficult option, Trigger point therapy relieves pain and stiffness caused by trigger points in the muscles. Trigger points keeps the muscles tensed and prevents them from relaxing. The trigger points are injected with anesthetics or corticosteroids,

which instantly relaxes the muscles and reduces the pain and discomfort experienced by the patient.

Naturopathic treatment uses unconventional methods other than the traditional western treatments to reduce the intensity of the symptoms. It relies on eliminating symptoms and making the body and the mind healthy in order to cure the condition.

Acupuncture and Acupressure therapy is a naturopathic treatment that makes use of acupuncture points in order to relax the body. In acupuncture, these points are manipulated by inserting needles in them, triggering the body to relax and in Acupressure, pressure is applied on them for eight to ten seconds in order to relax the body and relieve it from all sorts of pain. Craniosacral therapy is another alternative treatment technique that uses non invasive methods like palpation in order to relieve pain, and increase health of the patient. People suffering from fibromyalgia find this therapy helpful.

Improved health being an aim of naturopathic treatment, usage of herbs is introduced to patients suffering from fibromyalgia in order to cure the symptoms. St. John's Wort is beneficial when it comes to reducing depression. By slowing down neurotransmitters, the depressed mood is elevated. Other herbs like Juniper berries and Cayenne decrease the intensity of muscle and joint discomfort. Cayenne is applied to sore areas around the body and juniper berries are consumed. Use of garlic, astragalus, and Echinacea increases blood circulation, increasing the oxygen level in the body which improves the immune system making the patient resistant to symptoms.

Massage therapy is another form of alternative treatment that manipulates tissues and muscles in order to reduce pain and fatigue. This is a treatment that is usually done by hand via stroking and rubbing. This therapy is believed to increase production of certain pain inhibitors like endorphins, increase the flow of blood in the body and improves sleep. A variety of massages are available like Swedish massage, that increase the oxygen levels in the muscles, Deep-tissue massage, that focuses on the loosen areas of stiff tissues and muscles, myofascial release, a massage therapy that works on the fascia and myotherapy, a type that in which pressure is applied on the trigger points to achieve relaxation.

Rather unorthodox, Hypnosis is a technique that uses relaxation and meditation as a technique to enter into the subconscious mind to treat the symptoms of fibromyalgia. Fibromyalgia sufferers use hypnosis to reduce their pain symptoms and discomfort and increase their energy. Hypnosis is known to decrease muscle pain, morning fatigue, insomnia, and other sleep problems.

Electromyography (EMG), Peripheral Skin Temperature (PST), Electroderm Response (EDR), and Brainwave Electroencephalogram (EEG) are all forms of biofeedback

therapy that records impulses given off by the body in the form of temperature, muscle twitches and brain waves and then feeds back to the patient in order for him to try and reduce the abnormal readings caused by various symptoms of fibromyalgia. With enough practice, patients are able to reduce their symptoms without having to use their records.

Relaxation therapy is another form of alternative treatment that aims to relax the mind and body in order to improve health in general reducing various symptoms. Deep breathing, yoga, meditation and Progressive muscle relaxation are all forms of muscle relaxation therapy. In progressive muscle relaxation, muscles of the feet are tensed first and then relaxed, and then all the muscles are slowly worked through until the whole body is relaxed. Relaxation therapy helps fight pain and fatigue and many other symptoms of fibromyalgia including sleeping disorders.

A more innovative technique, cupping therapy uses glass cups which are applied to the skin to reduce pain, flush out toxins, and increase blood flow to the body. A vacuum is created in the glass cups which are placed on various parts of the body to ease pain and fatigue.

Among others, Light therapy is used to reduce symptoms ranging from chronic pain to depression. It makes use of the principle that our body reacts to changes in the intensities of light. Absorption of light while sitting or eating is all that is needed in order for it to affect the body. Color light therapy uses colored lights which are shown on different body parts. The eyes absorb the light and sends signals to the brain, and depending on the color, the brain releases chemicals that assist in reducing symptoms caused by fibromyalgia. Light therapy is not for those who suffer from glaucoma, epilepsy, and bipolar disorder.

Hydrotherapy makes use of water to cure illnesses and improve health. Used in different forms like icing, hot and cold compresses, and bathing, hydrotherapy yields the result of reducing stiffness, fatigue, and improving quality of sleep. Ice cubes, wrapped in plastic bags are applied to the body which reduces inflammation and swelling. Cold, lukewarm, and hot compresses are applied on the affected body part to achieve results, and cold and hot baths are taken, sometimes with herbs in the water to reduce the symptoms. Although being very beneficial, hydrotherapy is not recommended for the pregnant, the diabetic and patients with heart problems.

Low frequency sound therapy is yet another form of alternative therapy that makes use of infrasonic sound waves. Infrasonic sound waves are directed towards the body. Even though the sound does not register, the sound waves enter into the body and stimulate cell reproduction. Low frequency sound therapy helps increase overall mobility by reducing widespread pain and fatigue.

As the name suggests, Aromatherapy uses scents to treat various physiological and Psychological disturbances in the patient. It works by stimulating the sense of smell which is registered in the brain and chemicals are released which helps in blood circulation, increase pain tolerance, brightens the mood. Over one hundred and fifty oils to choose from, they can be inhaled directly, applied to the skin, used in bathing or dispersed around the room. Oils that are recommended for patients suffering from fibromyalgia include lavender, chamomile or jasmine to relax, lemon and grape fruit to increase energy, and black pepper and peppermint to ease sore joints.

Although being a massage, Reflexology is not the same as massage therapy. While massage therapy focuses on relieving pain and fatigue from muscles, reflexology aims to heal those body parts, which cannot be touched from the outside by manipulating pressure points. This therapy is somewhat similar to acupuncture and acupressure. Reflexology uses special pressure points to reduce tension in the muscle, improve bowel disturbances and reduce depression

Therapeutic humor is another form of Naturopathic treatment that clings on laughter and smiling as a resort to alleviating symptoms shown by a fibromyalgia patient. Sometimes, used with other therapies as well like yoga, Humor therapy reduces stress, muscle tension, blood pressure, anxiety, and improves breathing and memory. It is also believed that therapeutic humor strengthens the immune system making the body resistant to other illnesses.

The polluted environment sometimes is the culprit of the symptoms shown by fibromyalgia. The environmental therapy makes use of certain test including blood, urine, stool and hair analysis tests in order to pin point the toxins in the body. Then medication is given to counteract the problems these toxins cause. And the patient is introduced to an environment free from these toxins in order to improve the health. This is done by checking his home and work place for these toxins and by eliminating them

Moreover, music and dance therapy are also used as an instrument to improve the patient's wellbeing. Music therapy has a soothing effect on the patient which reduces stress and dance therapy increases the mobility of the patient and reduces the intensity of muscle strain and fatigue.

A more complex therapy, Chelation therapy works on the scientific concept that when an amino acid complex EDTA comes into contact with positively charged metals and other substances, it attaches to these toxins and removes them from the body. When EDTA unites to toxins, a stable compound is formed which is then excreted from the system. Although being very complex, the process naturally takes place in the body. It successfully eliminates ionic build up of the substances such as lead, iron, calcium, magnesium and zinc in the body. After chelatin therapy the body often experiences short term withdrawal symptoms which results in side effects such as diarrhea, fever and cramps.

Even though no specific relationship exists between fibromyalgia and diet, studies have shown that eating a diet composed of raw vegetables benefits most fibromyalgia patients. In the tests conducted it was also found out that as soon as the patients reverted to their old diet the symptoms resurfaced and this indicates that eating vegetables, in one way or another, does lead to reduced pain and stiffness. But, due to the unpredictable nature of the diet fibromyalgia relationship, it is always recommended that patients visit a nutritionist.

Some people prefer to battle the symptoms instead of the condition and they resort to various dietary habits to alleviate their pain. For example, people who believe that central sensitization is a key factor that contributes towards fibromyalgia have a high intake monosodium glutamate and aspartame as they try to regulate the body's pain transmission function. On the other hand, some patients choose to cut down their intake of refined sugars while some stop eating chocolates and other trigger substances as they try and suppress high sugar levels and migraines respectively.

It is also believed that regular dietary habits and drinking lots of water during the day suppresses fibromyalgia symptoms though there is no solid evidence to suggest so.

Due to the high number of female fibromyalgia patients a hormonal factors are also being investigated. Specifically, the effect of soy supplements on fibromyalgia and its symptoms is being studied based on the aforementioned gender disparity.

When suffering from Fibromyalgia, the body lacks in certain enzymes, which worsen the condition. Therefore enzyme supplements are introduced in the patient's diet in order to restore the levels of enzymes needed. Enzymes break down proteins and fats and assist in digestion. Thus more energy is absorbed by the body making it healthier. Enzymes like OxiCellZyme, DigestZyme, and PureZyme are recommended to fibromyalgia patients. Furthermore a nutritionist establishes which foods interfere with the wellbeing of the patient and then plans a meal specifically designed which comprises of some herbs such as cayenne pepper, fennel, lemon balm and golden seal to aid the patient and encourage overall health.

Other than enzyme supplements, certain amino acid supplements such as Chondroitin and Glucosamine supplements, which are produced less when suffering from Fibromyalgia, are also given in the diet. These amino acids reduce joint pain and fatigue. Side effects like intestinal gas, soft stools, nausea, and diarrhea appear when used regularly.

Bach Flower Remedies consists of thirty eight remedies, all being flower extracts, which are recommended in order to reduce the symptoms. Used individually or in a combination, Bach remedies have medications for nearly all fibromyalgia symptoms ranging from suffering, to depression. The remedies are diluted in water or the drops are directly put on the tongue.

CHAPTER 10

The Future Of Fibromyalgia Treatment

Fibromyalgia is not a condition that should be handled with leniency. Even though there is no cure for the condition, many remedies and treatments are available and if used correctly can turn this condition around.

The traditional western treatments like pain killers, anti depressants and trigger point therapy, all use synthetically manufactured medication which is helpful to many patient to some extent, but is never the less accompanied by many side effects including nausea, sexual dysfunction, blood pressure problems, weight gain, pain in case of trigger point therapy and an immense possibility of addiction to these medication leading to detox and withdrawal symptoms which could very well be dangerous to the patients health.

Naturopathic treatment on the other hand only uses natural treatments to achieve the goal of reduced symptoms and better health with minimal side effects, which not only cures the symptoms but also improves the wellbeing of the patient. Treatments such as massage, hydrotherapy and herbal treatments makes use of instruments provided by nature which are free from any additives, and thus have an overall better result than traditional western treatments. Other non conventional treatments are also used such as humor, dance and music therapy which reduces the depression of the individuals as well as improves sleep patterns.

Naturopathic treatment emphasize on a healthy diet regime which is used as a tool to tackle symptoms of fibromyalgia by making the patient's body healthy and making it capable to fight the condition from within. Naturopathic treatment fights the conditions using all senses for example reflexology which uses touch, aromatherapy, which uses smell, light therapy, which uses light and various Bach remedies which makes use of sense of taste in order to heal the patient. Moreover, music and low frequency sound therapies are also used which makes use of the sense of hearing in order to relieve the patient from pain.

All in all Naturopathy is a natural way of curing Fibromyalgia that offers various effective remedies with minimal side effects.

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