

- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Depression
- Endometriosis
- Headaches
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Lupus
- Osteoarthritis
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
- Restless Legs Syndrome
- Rheumatoid Arthritis

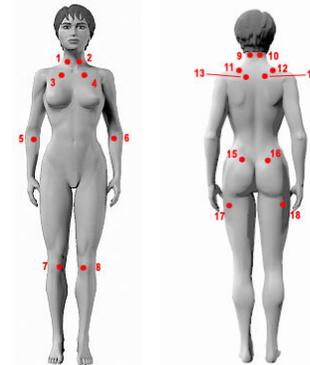
Massage Helps Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia is generally associated with achiness in the neck, trunk, and hips. Stiffness is felt in the morning, followed by fatigue and lethargy. Diagnosis is difficult because the symptoms are common to other conditions like fibrositis, myofascial pain, or rheumatoid arthritis. Unlike other forms of inflammatory arthritis, Fibromyalgia can't be verified through blood tests or x-rays. These tests are important, though, in ruling out other causes of diseases.

Fibromyalgia affects approximately 3-6 million people in the U.S., mostly women.

Massage is a very important part of the treatment of Fibromyalgia. Therapeutic massage assists in the removal of waste from mus-

cles, while increasing blood and nutrient flow. This results in a greater availability of oxygen to cells. Massage is particularly



useful when starting an exercise program. Under the best of conditions, soreness after exercise can be expected. For someone with Fibromyalgia, increased soreness can serve to discourage

further activity before benefits have been achieved. In the area of soreness reduction nothing works faster than massage.

Massage also alters the sleep pattern, which reduces levels of the chemical messenger for pain. It has also been shown to reduce pain, stiffness, fatigue, and sleeping difficulties.

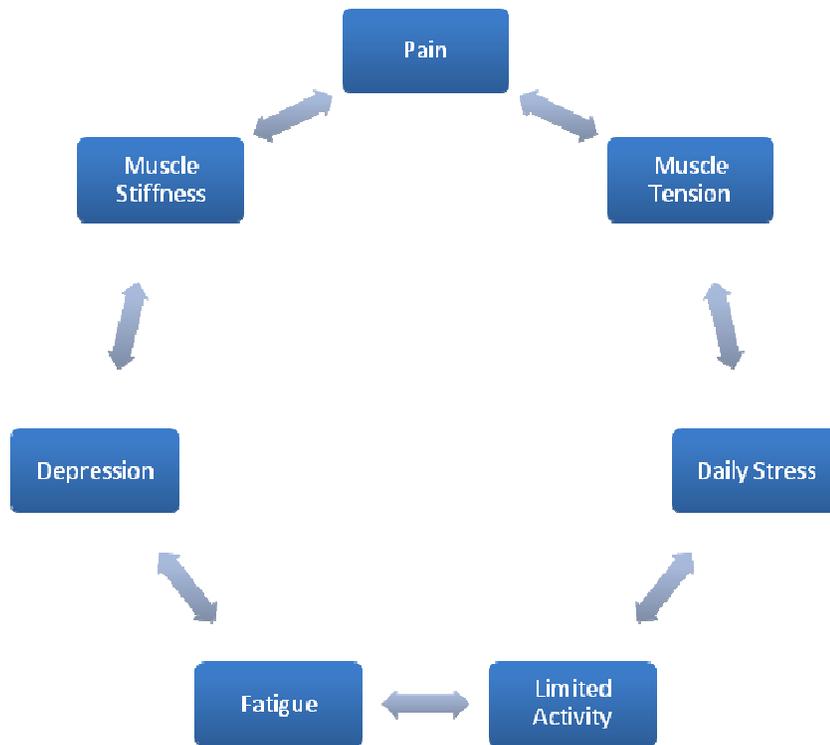
A study conducted by the Touch Research Institute in Miami found that massage decreased anxiety and depressed mood almost immediately after the first therapy session, and participants reported an increase in hours of sleep, as well as a decrease in their sleep movements.

- Taken from www.simplymassagetherapy.com/fibromyalgia

Symptoms of Fibromyalgia

1. Widespread musculoskeletal pain, usually occurring at multiple sites in the body. Pain has been described as a burning, gnawing, aching, or stiffness. Usually varies according to the time of day.
2. Fatigue. Sometimes the fatigue is severe. May fall asleep easily but sleep lightly and have a hard time staying asleep.
3. Problems with mood and concentration. Sadness, depression, and anxiety are common.
4. Other problems: Tension headaches and migraines; abdominal pain and bloating; frequent urination due to bladder spasms; dizziness; numbness or tingling in the hands and feet.

The Fibromyalgia Cycle



Causes of Fibromyalgia

Doctors don't know what causes fibromyalgia, but it most likely involves a variety of factors working together. These may include:

- **Genetics.** Because fibromyalgia tends to run in families, there may be certain genetic mutations that may make you more susceptible to developing the disorder.
- **Infections.** Some illnesses appear to trigger or aggravate fibromyalgia.
- **Physical or emotional trauma.** Post-traumatic stress disorder has been linked to fibromyalgia.

Why does it hurt?

Current thinking centers around a theory called central sensitization. This theory states that people with

fibromyalgia have a lower threshold for pain because of increased sensitivity in the brain to pain signals.

Researchers believe repeated nerve stimulation causes the brains of people with fibromyalgia to change. This change involves an abnormal increase in levels of certain chemicals in the brain that signal pain



Fibromyalgia is primarily a muscle condition and not a form of arthritis.

(neurotransmitters). In addition, the brain's pain receptors seem to develop a sort of memory of the pain and become more sensitive, meaning they can overreact to pain signals.

What are the risk factors?

- **Your sex.** Fibromyalgia occurs more often in women than in men
- **Age.** Fibromyalgia tends to develop during early and middle adulthood. But it can also occur in children and older adults.
- **Disturbed sleep patterns.** People with sleep disorders often have fibromyalgia.
- **Family history.**
- **Rheumatic disease.**

- Taken from www.mayoclinic.com