

Fibromyalgia

Treatment:

Follow the aids to optimal health

Exercise regularly. Dr. Andrew Weil states that exercise is the number one therapy for Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS). He suggests starting with just 5 minutes a day, if necessary, and then gradually building to 20-30 minutes a day at least four times a week. According to Weil, gentle exercises such as water aerobics, riding a stationary bike, and stretching are best. Although the pain may get worse at first, it will soon diminish.

Body work with techniques such as the Feldenkrais Method and Craniosacral therapy with myofascial release is helpful in some cases of FMS.

Specially designed magnets applied to painful areas are helpful for some individuals suffering from FMS. Magnets are available in a variety of shapes and sizes and come either individually or contained in products such as seat cushions, mattresses, and pillows.

Get plenty of rest. Helpful aids include

eliminating caffeine and alcohol.

getting evaluated for sleep apnea if snoring and/or grinding of teeth during sleep is a problem.

avoiding medications known to interfere with sleep such as narcotics and depressants such as valium.

taking melatonin 1 mg sublingually or 30 drops of an herbal tincture of kava kava in a small amount of warm water prior to going to bed.

Biofeedback is a useful technique for managing chronic pain.

Progressive muscle relaxation exercises help reduce muscle pain.

Homeopathic medications such as *rhus tox*, an antirheumatic remedy made from a minute amount of poison ivy, was found in one study to significantly reduce pain in FMS. Take as directed on the bottle.

Herbal medications* reported to be helpful in treating FMS include:

Zingiber officinale (ginger) 500 mg twice a day with food
(antiinflammatory)

Curcuma longa (tumeric) 400-600 mg three times a day
(antiinflammatory)

Boswellia (frankincense) - take as directed on the bottle (reduces pain)

tincture preparations of the following herbs:

Vitex agnus-castus (chasteberry) - 30 drops in water three times daily
(supports growth hormone)

Cimicifuga racemosa (Black Cohosh)- 30 drops in water 3-4 times
daily (muscle relaxant)

Hypericum perforatum (St. Johnswort) - 40-60 drops in water three
times daily (muscle relaxant). Please be aware that at extremely high
doses, St. Johnswort may cause photosensitivity caused by strong
sunlight and other sources of ultraviolet light.

Dioscorea villosa (wild yam) 30-40 drops in water three times daily
(muscle relaxant)

Eleutherococcus senticosus (Siberian ginseng) standardized
tincture(1:5) 30 drops in water three times daily for up to three
months (enhances the immune system)

Astragalus membranaceus (atragalus) - 30 drops in water three times
daily (enhances the immune system)

Ginko biloba (ginko leaf) - 60-90 drops in water three times daily
(improves oxygen metabolism and circulation)

Piper methysticum (kava kava root) tincture 30 drops 3-4 times daily
is useful for nervous anxiety and insomnia. A combination of the
tinctures kava kava and black cohosh in equal amounts , 50-60 drops (
25-30 drops of each) in water 4 times daily, is an effective
combination for treating fibromyalgia syndrome.

*Before combining different herbal tinctures, first refer to the
subsection on uses and dosages in the handout entitled General
considerations regarding herbal therapy.

Supplements helpful for treating FMS include:

L-carnitine 200-500 mg twice daily for 6 weeks (take on an empty stomach)

magnesium 300 - 1000 mg daily (the glycinate form is well absorbed and tolerated)

malic acid 1200 - 2400 mg daily

S-adenosyl methionine (SAM) 200 - 400 mg twice a day (don't use in bipolar disorder)

Massage painful areas with 5-10 drops of essential oils of periwinkle, rosemary or basil mixed in 20 cc sesame or almond oil.

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) can be helpful in detecting and reprogramming unconscious patterns of thought and behavior. NLP can result in altered psychological responses and enhance the healing process. Some psychologists have had special training in NLP. Books, audio tapes, and educational material is available from Dynamic Learning Center, P.O. Box 1112, Ben Lomond, CA 95005, 1-408-336-3457

Reiki is a form of healing energy which helps balance energy in the body thereby reducing pain and inflammation.

All forms of healing listed under the title *Other Aids to Healing* can be useful.