

MANAGING YOUR FIBROMYALGIA



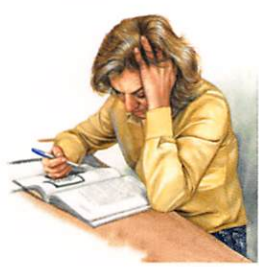
Symptoms of fibromyalgia



Chronic fatigue and general achiness



Not enough sleep and sleep is of poor quality

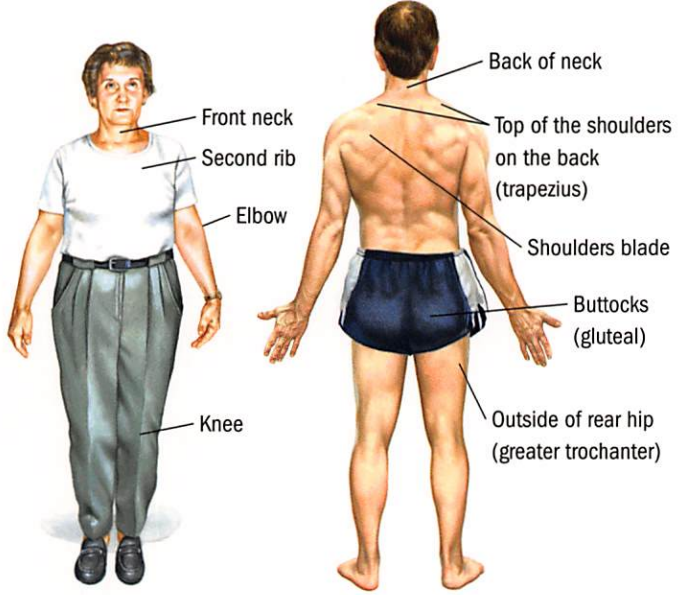


Poor concentration



Headache and pain in the chest or abdomen

Fibromyalgia tender points



What Is Fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia (FM) is a chronic condition causing pain in muscles, tendons, and ligaments. In FM, specific places in the body where pain is felt are called *tender points*.

What Causes Fibromyalgia?

The cause is unknown, but it is not thought to be an infection. Possibilities include poor sleep, certain chemicals called serotonin and substance P, muscle abnormalities, and stress hormones.

FM is most common in women aged between 20 and 50 and is also common in women older than 60.

What Are the Symptoms of Fibromyalgia?

Pain and fatigue are the main symptoms and can affect activities at work and home.

Pain is usually worse in the upper back and neck and the lower back and hips. Pain can occur near any tender point, however.

Fatigue can be severe. Headaches, numbness or tingling in the hands or feet, and forgetfulness are other symptoms.

How Is Fibromyalgia Diagnosed?

A doctor uses a medical history and an examination of joints and muscles for diagnosis. For a diagnosis of FM, the doctor must find at least 11 of the 18 tender points.

Laboratory tests and x-rays may be done to rule out other diseases causing similar symptoms. Blood tests and x-rays are usually normal in fibromyalgia.