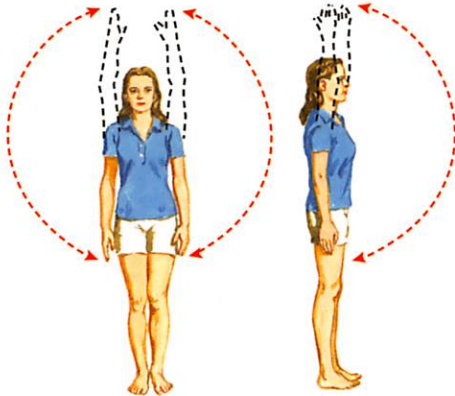




Treatment includes use of medicines, exercise, and counseling.



Get enough good sleep. Your doctor may prescribe medicine to help with this.



Every day, you should do stretching and posture exercises.



Four or five times a week, you should do endurance exercises.

## How Is Fibromyalgia Treated?

No cure exists for FM, but people with FM can feel better with the right treatment. Medicines, exercise, reducing stress, and improving sleep to reduce fatigue can help people feel better.

Drugs can improve the amount and quality of sleep. Interrupted sleep prevents people from reaching the deepest sleep, but medicines can help them reach this deeper stage of sleep. As a result, pain decreases. The most common medicines include low doses of antidepressants (e.g., amitriptyline or duloxetine). Common side effects include grogginess, dry mouth, constipation, and weight gain.

Exercises help reduce pain. Stretching and posture exercises should be done daily for good body alignment and to prevent pain. Endurance exercises should be done three or four times a week; these include walking, biking, and water therapy. It is important to begin to exercise slowly and to increase gradually.

Often people with FM forget how to relax. A counselor can offer relaxation therapy as well as family counseling to see whether depression or family or financial problems are contributing to FM.

## DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Fibromyalgia:

- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if you have drug side effects.
- ✓ **DO** ask your doctor what over-the-counter pain medications you may take.
- ✓ **DO** communicate and follow up with your healthcare workers.
- ⊘ **DON'T** expect medicines alone to reduce your pain and fatigue. Feeling better involves better sleep, exercise, and stress management.
- ⊘ **DON'T** take any diet supplement without discussing it first with your doctor.
- ⊘ **DON'T** stop exercising.

### FROM THE DESK OF

### NOTES

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

#### Contact the following sources:

Arthritis Foundation  
 Tel: (800) 283-7800  
 Web: [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org)  
 American College of Rheumatology  
 Tel: (404) 633-3777  
 Web: [www.rheumatology.org](http://www.rheumatology.org)