Do Rheumatologists Treat Fibromyalgia?

by MS. LAWANA

Rheumatologist and Fibromyalgia

Patients who suffer from the chronic pain of fibromyalgia may be looking for a diagnosis from a doctor so they can relieve their pain. Although there is no known cure for the condition, it is known that it affects mostly older women and rarely children. The condition is associated with chronic pain, which is often painful and burning. Sufferers can find relief through several different ways, and they must speak with a rheumatologist fibromyalgia specialist to learn about these ways.

Many people automatically assume a rheumatologist can treat and diagnose fibromyalgia. While they can diagnose the condition, are they the best solution? Often, fibromyalgia goes undetected or is misdiagnosed by other primary care doctors.

If your primary care doctor is unsure of what the problem is, he or she may send you to a neurologist or even a rheumatologist for a diagnosis. Rheumatologists are responsible for handling arthritis and can diagnose arthritis and also other conditions involving the joints, bones, and muscles. The rheumatologist can give a fibromyalgia diagnosis by ruling out any other problems.

Pin-Pointing Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia can be a difficult condition to narrow down and can take a while until a full diagnosis is reached. For a rheumatologist to suggest fibromyalgia, the patient must be experiencing pain for a minimum of 3 months, has pain on both sides of the body, and the pain is above and also below the waist.

An average estimate of 2 years is very generous when it comes to how long a fibromyalgia diagnosis can take. A rheumatologist will look for different signs and symptoms before they make a diagnosis. These include:

- Fatigue, reoccurring and chronic.
- Tenderness.
- Memory loss or concentration problems.
- Pain, widespread and consistent.
- Problems with sleep.

Tender Points Related to Fibromyalgia

The American College of Rheumatology has designated certain pain points or tender spots that are associated with fibromyalgia and experienced by patients. These pain points occur in the following:

- Elbows.
- Knees.
- Hips.

- Upper chest.
- Neck, front and back.
- Upper shoulder on the back.
- Upper and lower buttocks.

Treating Fibromyalgia

A rheumatologist can effectively diagnose fibromyalgia if your primary care doctor cannot. Different guidelines are to be followed. These guidelines have been established and published by the American College of Rheumatology.

You may find that your rheumatologist uses one or more different methods and guides to diagnose your treatment. This allows them to rule anything else out and determine if any of the pain is stemming from other problems that are being masked by fibromyalgia.

Finding a Rheumatologist

If you believe that you are suffering from fibromyalgia, ask your primary care doctor to refer you to a rheumatologist. You can also look for a rheumatologist on your own. Make sure that the doctor you choose has experience in diagnosing fibromyalgia and also listens to your symptoms. This is very important so that a misdiagnosis is not done. A rheumatologist is often looked to for diagnosing fibromyalgia and visiting one in your local area to find out if you are suffering from the condition. If you are diagnosed with fibromyalgia, you can apply for disability to afford treatment and begin treatment right away to help relieve any of the pain associated with it.