Avoiding Cabin Fever With Fibromyalgia

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Ways to Prevent Cabin Fever With Fibromyalgia

If you find yourself spending lots of time at home because of too much pain, low mood or lack of energy you may also find you have cabin fever with fibromyalgia. While 'cabin fever' is not a true psychiatric condition, its effects are very real. When you spend a long time in one place with little to do, your mind tells you that the environment you are in is not optimal for functioning properly. You feel restricted and have difficulty tolerating the lack of freedom to do what you wish to.

Signs of cabin fever include feeling cooped up, having problems with memory or concentration, lack energy or motivation to do anything, or become irritated for no obvious reason. If you experience any of these issues, there are a few things and tips you could use.

Keep a Routine

If you're not leaving your home, it can be tempting to stay in your pajamas all the time, but it's important to maintain some kind of structure in your days. Get up at a certain time every day, shower and get dressed.

Plan your days out, including rest times, and get into a rhythm. Some days you may not be able to stick to your routine, and that's OK, but sticking to a routine most of the time will help give you a sense of purpose and help stave off negative thoughts.

Keep Moving

Doing absolutely no physical activity most likely won't make you feel better. If anything, it will make you feel more tired and less motivated to get back to your normal activities. Rest when you need to, but try to exercise a bit. You may want to start with some light stretching exercises, yoga or tai chi.

Exercise keeps your joints mobile, brings your energy levels up, and helps your body release feel-good chemicals, which also have pain killing qualities. Pick up a workout DVD, or follow a fitness program on YouTube, and try to work out every day at the same time to make it a habit.

Sleep Well

There is time when you need active, and there is time for rest. Staying at home will make you more likely to take naps during the day, or sleep longer at night. Yet, you make wake up feeling more tired than the previous day.

Consider both the quality and quantity of your sleep. Aim for eight hours of sleep at night, and go to bed and wake up at the same time.

If needed, take a nap during the day, but keep it short (no more than 20 – 30 minutes). Unplug all electronic

devices and keep the room dark so melatonin (the hormone responsible for quality, deep sleep) will be produced in your body.

Melatonin is also available in supplement form and has been used for various conditions, from improving your sleep to helping manage blood pressure, protecting the brain, fighting headaches and even cancer.

Have a Hobby

There are plenty of hobbies you can do without leaving your home and without using too much energy. Read — or listen to — a good book, learn to knit, write a journal or a blog, do some crafts or a puzzle. There are so many possibilities — there's bound to be something you find enjoyable and can manage without too much pain.

Connect With Others

Joining an online community of forum is a great way to connect with other people with fibromyalgia — you don't have to leave your home, but it will help to reduce any feelings of isolation you may be feeling. Talking with other fibro sufferers will also allow you to learn new strategies for managing your condition and to receive (and provide) emotional support.