Does Fibromyalgia Cause Muscle Spasms?

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Fibromyalgia and Muscle Spasms

Fibromyalgia is a pain. It not only causes pain all throughout the body, but it also produces different types of pain, such as fibromyalgia muscle spasms.

The most commonly seen types of pain with fibromyalgia are:

- **Hyperalgesia:** pain amplification.
- **Allodynia:** pain to the touch.
- **Painful paresthesia:** painful nerve sensations.

But our pain does not stop there, not by a long shot. Another common complaint many of us with fibromyalgia have is the pain of muscle spasms.

What Are Muscle Spasms?

A muscle spasm is a contraction of the muscle; it is sudden and painful. A spasm may last only a few seconds, but can last for several minutes and may happen repeatedly. Sometimes referred to as a charley horse, muscle spasms are incredibly painful.

A spasm is not to be confused with a muscle twitching, which is painless, albeit annoying. I have personally experienced being awaken in the middle of the night writhing in pain on numerous occasions and I can assure you there is a huge difference between a spasm and a twitch.

Muscle spasms in fibromyalgia seem to happen most commonly in the neck, shoulders and back. But they can occur anywhere, and I have had them on my back, legs and feet.

What's the Connection Between Fibromyalgia and Muscle Spasms?

Here are some facts you need to know about fibromyalgia and muscle spasms:

- The particular type of spasm people with fibromyalgia is referred to as muscular rheumatism.
- It is believed that the cause of muscular rheumatism may be due to uncontrollable contractions of muscle spasms in the affected areas.
- Studies done on individuals with fibromyalgia have revealed that some experienced change in the mitochondria, the powerhouse of the cell, in their muscle cells. Others had abnormalities in their pain receptor metabolisms. Others had micro-blood circulation changes, resulting in constriction of their capillaries in the tissues where the muscle spasm occurs.
- Another study suggests that our spasms may be caused by myofascial trigger points, a ropy band of tissue that forms when soft tissue is injured and does not heal properly.

- It is also possible muscle spasms could be caused by our overactive nerves, nutrients deficiencies, or a variety of other things.

What Can Be Done About Fibromyalgia Muscle Spasms?

Whether doctors and researchers will ever fully understand the exact cause of these painful spasms remains to be seen. In the meantime, we need to know what do to help relieve this pain.

Here are some things that have been found to be beneficial in reducing the number of muscle spasms:

- Heat and/or cold therapy – try switching between ice packs and heating pads.
- Topical pain relieving creams or ointments.
- Gentle stretching – be aware that strenuous stretching may have the opposite effect.
- Epsom salt baths.
- Massage – try a gentle self-massage in the affected area.
- Acupuncture.
- Adequate rest.
- Magnesium and malic acid supplements.
- Eat a potassium-rich diet – foods rich in potassium include sweet potatoes, beans (especially white beans), potatoes, yogurt and prunes.
- Calcium through diet and/or supplementation – foods rich in calcium include white beans, kale, orange juice, black eyed peas, bok choy and almonds.
- Vitamin D through sunlight, diet and/or supplementation – foods rich in vitamin D include cod liver oil, salmon, mackerel, eggs and mushrooms.
- Avoid dehydration by drinking plenty of water and eating hydrating foods – hydrating foods include cucumber, celery, tomatoes, cauliflower, watermelon and strawberries.

It may take time to find the right combination that will help you the most. I found drinking plenty of water, plus taking magnesium and vitamin D supplements have made a big difference for me.

Muscle spasms are yet another example of the odd, frustrating and painful symptoms of fibromyalgia we have to live with. But there are things we can do to improve our quality of life.

Knowing The Signs of Fibromyalgia Muscle Spasms

Knowing the signs of muscle spasms can help you identify if you are at risk for experiencing them, which can lead you to talking to your doctor and seeking a treatment plan. Be aware that muscle twitches and pain should not go unnoticed. Symptoms of muscle spasms include:

- Weakness in muscles.
- Numbness in skin.
- Experiencing a sensation of pins and needles.
- Slower movements.
- Tremors or pain in the back. neck, or head.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, talk to your doctor and see what type of treatment plan can be put into place.