5 Things That May Help You Find Pain Relief for Fibromyalgia

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Understanding Your Fibromyalgia Pain Relief Options

What is fibromyalgia? It is a chronic, long-term, condition that affects the body's central nervous system. There is an extremely long list of possible symptoms and other companion conditions that plague those of us with fibromyalgia. The most common symptoms are usually:

- Widespread pain.
- Fatigue.
- Joint or muscle stiffness.
- Cognitive fatigue, also called brain fog or fibro fog.

Of all of these, pain throughout the body is the number one factor of fibromyalgia. When dealing with pain that attacks the joints, muscles, nerves and skin, it is not difficult to understand why we need help to relieve fibromyalgia pain.

There is not yet a cure for fibromyalgia. Sadly, there is no pill, elixir, exercise program, or essential oil that will magically do away with all of your fibromyalgia symptoms. One reason is that every individual with fibromyalgia is affected differently by the illness and react differently to treatments.

5 Ways to Cope and Treat Fibromyalgia Pain Relief

The good news is, several treatments have been successful in reducing pain and other symptoms of fibromyalgia. Here are five fibromyalgia pain relief options worth trying.

Medication

One of the first lines of treatment for fibromyalgia pain is medication. While there is no medication to treat all of the symptoms of fibromyalgia, there are several medications which may reduce pain.

Some may find fibromyalgia pain relief by taking over-the-counter pain relievers, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or naproxen sodium.

Some doctors may prescribe a pain medication like tramadol, a narcotic. Many doctors are hesitant to prescribe narcotics though. There is a risk that taking narcotics could lead to dependency, as well as causing worse pain over time. The first rheumatologist that treated me explained it this way, when you take narcotics regularly you will eventually build up a tolerance. The more you take, the higher your tolerance will be and the more you will need to take to gain relief.

Antidepressants are another class of medication that has helped relieve pain for some with fibromyalgia. Duloxetine and milnacipran are both used for this reason.

At times doctors may prescribe anti-seizure drugs, such as gabapentin or pregabalin. While these medications are made to treat epilepsy, they also work to relieve certain types of pain. As with most treatment options, these may help some but do nothing for another. Others still, may find they cause side effects that are just too unpleasant to live with.

Natural Remedies for Fibromyalgia Pain Relief

There are a number of natural supplements and products that have been helpful for some with fibromyalgia.

- **Vitamin D supplements.** These have helped to lessen some fibromyalgia symptoms for those that are low or deficient.
- **Magnesium.** This is another common deficiency found in fibromyalgia. Magnesium can be taken as a supplement and topical sprays. Epsom salt is another form of magnesium that can help soothe sore, aching muscles.
- **S-adenosyl-L-methionine (SAMe).** This is a substance that occurs naturally in the body. Some studies have suggested that SAMe may help relieve fibromyalgia pain for some.
- **5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP).** This is a naturally occurring amino acid that helps your body produce serotonin. Some studies suggest 5-HTP may help improve some fibromyalgia symptoms, including pain.
- **Topical creams or ointments.** These may help relieve pain. Some contain capsaicin, the substance that makes chili peppers hot, creating a warming sensation. Other products may contain menthol or peppermint, which causes a cooling sensation. Choosing which is right for you depends on whether you find more relief from heat or cold.

Before trying any new vitamins or supplements, talk with your doctor to make sure they will not interfere with any other medications or conditions.

Lifestyle Changes to Help Lessen Fibromyalgia Pain

I feel that the most important thing I have done to treat and lessen fibromyalgia pain is simply by learning my limits. Lifestyle changes are not easy! But they are necessary to cope with fibromyalgia successfully.

Here are a few lessons that I have had to learn the hard way:

- Listen to your body, do not ignore the warning cries until you break down and can do no more.
- Limit strenuous activities, take breaks even when you don’t think you need them.
- Say no when you need to.
- Develop healthy sleep habits. If you need a supplement or medication to get a good night’s rest, talk to your doctor about it. Try to limit daytime napping, as much as possible.
- Relax and destress as much as you can, take a bubble bath; read a book; sit outside doing nothing but watching the trees sway in the wind; do some deep breathing.
- Do not let negative thoughts and feelings fester. Find ways to let it out and let it go; see a therapist if you need to.
- Find things that you enjoy and do them! Find things that make you feel fulfilled and do them!

Exercise

I know, exercise is the last thing you want to do when you are in pain. But study after study has shown that over time, exercise does help to decrease pain and other fibromyalgia symptoms. If you have not exercised in a while, go slowly and pace yourself.

Try low impact exercise, like stretching and core strengthening; walking; water aerobics; biking; weight training.

Learn balance and moderation in your activities, do not do too much on good days and then do nothing on bad days.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture uses tiny needles to change blood flow and the levels of neurotransmitters in the brain and spinal cord. Some studies show acupuncture can help relieve fibromyalgia symptoms. But the benefits can vary from person to person.

The Takeaway...

There are many symptoms that we must endure and learn to cope with. But we should never give up on gaining relief from the most troubling symptoms, namely fibromyalgia pain.