The Importance of Wearing a Medical Alert ID With Fibromyalgia

by AMERICAN MEDICAL ID

Medical Alert ID for Fibromyalgia

Should I wear a medical ID for fibromyalgia? This is a common question asked on the Internet. In the US, about 10 million people have fibromyalgia. If you received a fibromyalgia diagnosis, it is recommended that you wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace at all times. Keep reading to learn the important reasons why.

Photo credit: @DancingWithDys

Fibromyalgia can amplify painful sensations. Someone living with this medical condition can feel more pain than the average healthy person. These painful, uncomfortable, and distracting sensations can happen anytime with fibromyalgia.

Common symptoms include persistent pain throughout the body, fatigue, cognitive fatigue (also known as brain fog), joint stiffness, muscle stiffness and spasms, sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, or mood swings, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), jaw pain, or Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) disorders, headaches, hormonal imbalances, sensitivity to lights, sounds, cold, and heat, skin sensitivities, and frequent or painful urination.

Fibromyalgia Flares and Emergencies

There are nearly 5.5 million ambulance calls annually related to fibromyalgia.

A study by the *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Investigations* (JCEI) also shows that Fibromyalgia patients often represent themselves to emergency services for pain management.

A fibromyalgia flare or flare-up happens when common symptoms increase in number and intensity. Unfortunately, fibromyalgia flares or attacks are an unavoidable part of having this medical condition and can strike at any time or place. Potential flare-up triggers also vary from one person to another. Some of these triggers can include:

- Changes in temperature
- Physical stress
- Lack of sleep
- Stressful events such as accidents

Sometimes, a fibromyalgia flare-up can cause a person to feel dizzy, faint, and become unconscious. There is concern for fibromyalgia patients on how they can communicate important medical information in these situations and get the proper help that they need. A community member from Healing Well shared, "I've had flare-ups, and people did not know what to do. Some people have me lay down, put ice on my head or heat blankets on me, give me oranges, give me aspirin, have me sit for an hour, give me water, Pedialyte, take me to ER, freak out,

and get confused or scared."

Communicating Fibromyalgia with a Medical ID

Fibromyalgia is an invisible medical condition that is not readily apparent or obvious to other people, even to first responders or emergency personnel. In a medical situation, engraved information on medical alert bracelets or necklaces make it easier to communicate and draw attention to an illness like fibromyalgia that is otherwise unseen.

Hannah Lesley, a fibromyalgia influencer and advocate says, "My medical ID has saved me countless times in the face of my unpredictable health concerns, from high to low with my HR sitting at 120 and then dropping to 61 (cue super fainting), fibro pain that knocked me off of my feet, fibro rash triggering my sensory issues (usually in public), blood sugar bottoming out and more. In every instance, whether at home, out on the town or out of town - I have known that I am the safest I could be. I know that my friends can breathe. My mother can breathe. Even if I'm in an episode and am conscious but unable to communicate by mouth, a shake of my wrist is all I ever need."

A fibromyalgia medical ID can help:

- Identify yourself in an emergency.
- Inform others about your medical condition and help avoid misdiagnosis.
- Let others know what to do (i.e., call 911 or your emergency contact).
- Receive the right treatment and care that you need, with consideration to fibromyalgia.
- Alert medical professionals about medications that you are currently taking to prevent unwanted side-effects or dangerous interactions with other drugs.
- Reduce stress, anxiety, and allow you to enjoy more peace of mind.

What to Engrave on your Medical ID

Custom-engraving ensures that a medical ID is specific to the wearer’s medical conditions. An alert ID should reflect accurate and vital information that can be life-saving in an emergency. Here are the most important things to engrave:

- Name.
- Medical Condition/s – include allergies to food or medication.
- Medication – current prescription medication. An emergency wallet card can also be used to list medications and other supplementary information. If using a wallet card, engrave “See Wallet Card” on the medical ID.
- In Case of Emergency (ICE) contact person and their phone number.

Medical IDs can be worn as a bracelet or necklace and can have different sizes to fit the most crucial health information. For more tips on how to choose a medical alert ID and more, read this guide on Choosing a Medical ID.

Do you wear a medical alert ID for fibromyalgia? Share your comments with us!