

# MANAGING FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia is a disorder that affects an estimated 3-6% of the world population. Men and women of all ages may be affected, but fibromyalgia is common among those 20 to 50 years of age. In the past, fibromyalgia patients were misdiagnosed with depression, hypochondria or arthritis because of their symptoms of fatigue, sleeplessness and pain in their muscles and joints. Fibromyalgia as defined by the National Fibromyalgia Association is a profound and chronic widespread pain.

The soft tissue pain can be described as stabbing and shooting with deep muscular aching, throbbing, and twitching. An individual with fibromyalgia may have 11 to 18 tender points affected by deep muscle pain, and these points are very painful when pressed. The tender points are scattered over the neck, back, chest, elbows, hips, buttocks and the knees. The pain may cause the individual to have sleepless nights and become fatigued which is not to be defined as just being tired, but it is all encompassing exhaustion and poor stamina. Other symptoms related to fibromyalgia are anxiety, depression, headaches, migraines and irritable bowel syndrome. There are no specific factors for why people get fibromyalgia but genetics, illness or a traumatic injury to the body may be triggers for fibromyalgia.

If you have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia, then self care is critical in relieving pain and stress by maintaining a healthy lifestyle with eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep and reducing stress through exercise by walking, swimming, yoga or biking. Counseling is helpful with fibromyalgia, as there are many relaxation and coping techniques that are beneficial in assisting with managing the pain and fatigue of this disorder. Taking care of you physically and mentally is critical in the management of fibromyalgia!

**If you have any questions pertaining to fibromyalgia, please give our Personal Health Partners a call at 800-327-7272.**

