

# THE BASICS 540.985.0500

Back to Basics Physical Therapy 1015 First Street SW, Roanoke, VA 24016

## » Is Fibromyalgia Causing Too Many Aches & Pains?

Fibromyalgia is a condition in which your body "hurts all over", leaving you tired and exhausted. It is a chronic condition that causes widespread pain, tenderness and stiffness for millions of people across the country.

Fibromyalgia tends to be more common in women, and the exact cause is unknown. It can be difficult to diagnose since there is no specific test for it, but it's usually detected by performing various tests (including neurological tests) to rule out other diseases. Some symptoms of fibromyalgia include:



- Pain in "tender points" including muscles, tendons, or joints in both sides of the body
- Sleep disturbances
- Fatigue due to lack of deep sleep
- Mental and/or emotional disturbances
- Headaches, dizziness, tingling, and abdominal pain.

The severity of these symptoms can vary depending on the weather, stress, physical activity or even the time of day.

Although it's not a progressive condition, it can lead to other conditions including depression, sleep deprivation, restless leg syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), fatigue, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis.

## » Why Does It Hurt?

It is believed that people with fibromyalgia have a lower threshold for pain because of increased sensitivity to pain "messages" in the brain. This means that the brain's pain receptors become more sensitive to pain signals.

### What Puts You At Risk?

- **Gender.** Women are more at risk than men.
- **Age.** Over 80% of those diagnosed are between 35 and 55 years of age.
- **Disturbed sleep patterns.** It's unclear whether sleeping difficulties are a cause or a result of fibromyalgia.
- People with **sleep disorders** (like nighttime muscle spasms in the legs, restless legs syndrome, or sleep apnea) often have fibromyalgia.
- **Family history.** If a family member has this condition, your risk for developing it is greater.
- **Rheumatic disease.** If you have a rheumatic disease such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus, you may be more likely to develop fibromyalgia.

Even though fibromyalgia isn't progressive, it can lead to depression and lack of sleep. These problems can also interfere with the ability to function in your personal and professional life.

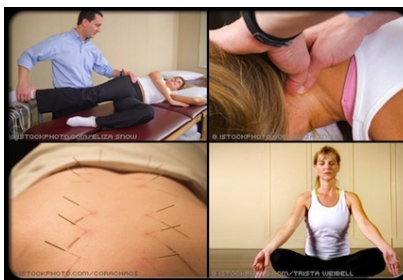
## » What Can Physical Therapy Do For You?

If your doctor diagnoses you with fibromyalgia, he/she is likely to prescribe medications including pain medicine, anti-depressants and anti-seizure drugs.


### Physical therapy is critical in the management of fibromyalgia.

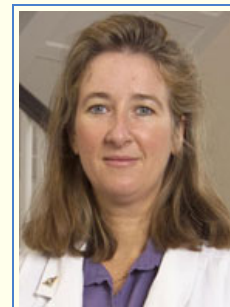
Although there is no known cure for fibromyalgia, physical therapy has been shown to help ease symptoms of pain, fatigue and stiffness. The most effective approach includes a combination of:

- Patient education – this is the first, most important step
- Stress management
  - Avoid or limit emotional stress.
  - Take time to relax each day.
  - Stay active. Regular activity helps decrease stress.
  - Deep-breathing exercises or meditation are always helpful.
- Consistent sleep patterns
  - Get enough sleep so you avoid fatigue (one of the symptoms of fibromyalgia).
  - Try to avoid anything with caffeine (coffee, chocolate, and caffeinated drinks) at least 4 hours prior to bedtime. It will help you sleep better.
- Exercise regularly



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Francine Noel-Ford, DPT

Back to Basics Family Physical Therapy

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### Patient Testimonial

Excellent experience with Back to Basics. Keep up the great work ladies!

### Do you need **Physical Therapy**?

If you have any of the following **conditions** we can **help!**

Tendonitis/ Bursitis  
Sprain/ Strain  
Jaw, Neck, or Back Pain  
Tension Headache  
Pelvic Pain/ Incontinence  
Lymphedema  
Trigger Points

Pre/ Post Surgical Protocols

Most Insurances Accepted!

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Please help us welcome our new Physical Therapy assistant, Jennifer Cooper and our new Physical Therapist, Andrea LeGault.**

**We are now offering Pre/ Post Natal, Osteoporosis, Pilates and Yoga Classes. Please call 540.985.0500 to register.**

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Also view our blog at

- o Slow, progressive exercise helps fight the symptoms of fibromyalgia.
- o Low-impact aerobic exercises like swimming, cycling, and walking can be effective, but it's best to consult a physical therapist before you start exercising.
- o Stretching and maintaining good posture will also help. Ask your therapist to find out what exercises will work best for you.
- o Know your limits and stay within them.



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REFER A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND AND RECEIVE A FREE 1/2 HOUR GIFT CERTIFICATE FOR A MASSAGE!

***(MUST BE A PREVIOUS PATIENT)***



*If you suspect, or have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia, we can help. Talk to your physical therapist to see how you can control your symptoms and return to the activities you enjoy.*

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