

CHAPTER 71: Fibromyalgia

From: "All Your Health Questions Answered Naturally" by Maureen Kennedy Salaman, MKS Inc. 650-854-3922 -as seen on Benny Hinn

Patty Dopp was a healthy 34-year-old ski instructor- an athletic, adventuresome person, always the first to suggest a bike ride, a ski trip or a bumpy Jeep trek to a jungle archeological site. Further, she had been health-conscious years before it was fashionable, cutting out saturated fat and red meat, making sure to stretch properly before and after exercise.

Her body was more than her friend. Its strength, grace, and health was a central component of her identity. She had taken her health for granted since she was a young girl, serving as the captain of the soccer team and the belle of the senior prom.

And then it happened: pain. Pain that cut through her back and legs like a molten spear. Pain that turned her into a different person someone who was fearful, no longer the natural optimist in control of her world.

The pain cut beyond her muscles, tendons and nerves. It attacked her soul. She felt betrayed. She had spent all her life in service to her body; had nurtured it, challenged it, developed it. She had protected it from pollutants, shielded it from injury. Now it had turned on her, breaking its half of the commitment.

Like many with this confounding affliction, it began during a stress. Patty's father was recovering from heart surgery she began to experience numbness down the back of her left thigh after the daily half hour drive to and from the hospital.

Following pronouncement by an internist, neurologist and doctor of physical rehabilitative medicine that it was a bulging spinal

disc, the numbness turned to pains which coursed down both legs to her toes. It took seven months of hits and misses before she was given a diagnosis that she was certain was correct: fibromyalgia, sometimes known as fibrositis.

Fibromyalgia is a rheumatic condition that causes pain and spasms in tendons, ligaments and muscles, sometimes creating enough irritation to inflame nerves. The condition is usually accompanied by insomnia that robs the body of rest, thereby blocking it from healing itself. In fact, recent research indicates that the sleep disorder might actually cause the tissue irritation. Five million Americans, 80 per cent of them women between 25 and 50, have fibromyalgia. Although doctors have chronicled the symptoms of fibromyalgia since 1904, and it was the most common cause of non-combat disability for soldiers during WWI, it wasn't until the 1980s that it became widely recognized in the medical community.

The Magnesium/Calcium Connection

Stress is one of the common denominators of fibromyalgia. We know what stress does to the body: adrenaline increases heart rate and blood pressure, causing veins to dilate and blood sugar to rise. Circulation through lungs, liver and skeletal muscles increases by as much as one hundred percent. High amounts of adrenaline inhibit digestion and reproduction, and while we aren't necessarily conscious of all the changes that take place, what we might notice are sore, weak muscles, constipation and fatigue. It is interesting that fibromyalgia patients have exhibited most of these stress-related symptoms.

Dr. Hans Seyle, author of the book "Stress Without Distress", and a Nobel prize winning biologist, found in rat experiments that in stressful situations, calcium is drawn from the bones and deposited in the tissues. When this happens, the calcium can crystalize, causing blockages and pain.

A lack of certain nutrients also triggers accumulations of calcium in the soft tissues of the body, which causes or contributes to pain.

Thomas J. Romano, M.D., a faculty member of the American Academy of Pain Management in Wheeling, West Virginia, studied 100 fibromyalgia patients and found that many were deficient in magnesium.

Magnesium and calcium work in balance throughout our bodies. Without magnesium, calcium accumulates in places it shouldn't. The consequences of taking calcium without magnesium is that calcium moves from where it belongs: hard tissue (the bones), to where it doesn't: soft tissues (muscles, arteries and the skin).

Magnesium Minimizes Pain

One study showed that aspirin didn't work properly unless accompanied by magnesium.

Magnesium is very important to the muscles, a source of pain for many. It counters the stimulating effect calcium, as well as helps promote absorption of calcium, phosphorus, potassium, the B vitamins, and vitamins C and E. A deficiency of magnesium can cause muscle cramps, depression and blood clots.

Magnesium has been used to inhibit pain from spinal cord injuries, and James Braly, M.D., Medical Director of Immuno Labs, Inc. Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, recommends magnesium glycinate in a program of nutritional pain supplementation.

Dr. Guy Abraham studied the effects of combining Malic acid with Magnesium in 15 fibromyalgia patients, 32 to 60 years old. A placebo group received nothing, while the supplement group was placed on 1,200 to 2,400 mg of Malic acid and 300 to 600 mg of magnesium daily. Incredibly, after only 48 hours, the group taking the supplements had a significant decrease in tender points, and after eight weeks the pain among the supplement group decreased substantially. In the placebo group, the pain increased after just two weeks.

B Vitamins Alleviate Stress and Pain

I. S. Klemes, M.D., found that vitamin B 12 helps break up calcium deposits in bursitis patients, and alleviate so-called neuralgia, a technical term for nerve pain. Klemes injected a daily dose of centimeter of vitamin B 12 for seven to 10 days, followed by the same injection three times weekly for the next two to three weeks, then one or two weekly for two to three weeks, depending upon the patient's progress. Relief came quickly as calcium deposits were absorbed.

In studying the pain of fibromyalgia patients, Dr. Jean-Bernard Eisinger, Chief of Medicine at Hopital G. Clemenceau, La Garde. France, found a study group taking B complex vitamins, including 750 milligrams per day of thiamin hydrochloride in divided doses, experienced less pain following orthopedic surgery. Fibromyalgia patients are found to have trouble absorbing thiamine – vitamin B1. Japanese researchers report therapeutic benefits to neuralgia using thiamin.

It is worth noting here that thiamine requires an adequate supply of magnesium.

Seeking Serotonin

Another theory is that people with fibromyalgia are deficient in a neurotransmitter called serotonin, which filters out unnecessary sensations and allows the brain to relax enough to sleep. Without serotonin, everything feels extreme, both pain and pleasure. Even noises sound too loud, and it is difficult to sleep more than a few hours in a row.

Tryptophan, an amino acid found naturally in the body, is important to mental health, pain regulation and sleep. Stress depletes it, and is found to be deficient in people with depression and fibromyalgia. Not enough tryptophan, and serotonin levels are low.

European physicians prescribe tryptophan for insomnia, pain, stress and depression.

Synthetic tryptophan has been banned in this country, but naturally derived sources are slowly finding themselves in amino acid formulas on vitamin store shelves.

Tryptophan works most efficiently in the presence of plenty of Vitamin B6. Women who take oral contraceptives need a minimum 20 mg of vitamin B6 daily in order to metabolize tryptophan normally.

Vitamin C is also important to the metabolism of serotonin, and is recommended for inflammation-induced pain. If you choose to supplement, vitamin C with bioflavonoids is a must for optimum effect.

Muscle weakness associated with fibromyalgia may be treated with the amino acid methionine, magnesium and phosphorus. The amino acid arginine may be used for general pain and fatigue; and thiamine and B6 may be used for muscle pain." All the nutrients mentioned here can be purchased through either your local health or vitamin store, by mail order, or your local drug store by special order.

In a study reported in Current Therapeutic Research, Italian researchers evaluated 47 patients with fibromyalgia who received 200mg of methionine (S-adenosylmethionine) intramuscularly, plus 400 mg orally twice daily for six weeks, and found it significantly reduced their stress and pain. This result was duplicated in another study of 30 patients. Of these, a full third saw the severity of the pain and the number of tender points reduced. Methionine is high in potatoes and legumes (beans and peas). Like tryptophan, it also needs vitamin B6 to work.

Whenever I recommend one B vitamin, I recommend all of them. They are so important to each other, a deficiency of one creates an imbalance of the others. The B complex vitamins have been coined "the stress vitamins," they are so important. Since stress seems to be a precursor to fibromyalgia, taking a good B vitamin supplement formula is an excellent idea.

Dr. Alan Gaby has had success treating fibromyalgia patients with what he calls the "Myers cocktail." It is a combination of intravenous calcium, magnesium, B vitamins and vitamin C.

A colleague at the American Academy of Pain Management in San Antonio, Texas, Billie J. Sahley, Ph.D., has helped patients correcting their nutrient deficiencies of Malic acid (found in apples) magnesium and manganese, adding Melatonin for sleep difficulties.

Remember my friend Patty? She is doing much better. She found that a consistent exercise program combined with a diet centered around raw vegetables, beans and whole grains, and good nutritional supplements allows her to have a normal lifestyle mostly free of pain.

Fibromyalgia-Fleeing Nutrients

For maximum absorption, supplements should be taken with meals.

<i>Nutrient</i>	<i>Suggested Dosage</i>	<i>Formulation</i>
Aged garlic extract	2 teaspoons 3x daily	Liquid
Amino Acids	4-6 caps daily	Multiple formula -natural sources
Antioxidants	4 caps daily*	With selenium and grape seed extract
Borage oil	2 caps daily	
Enzymes	2 caps twice daily	Multiple formula
Flaxseed oil	1 teaspoon daily	
Fibre	8 tablets daily	Psyllium with herb hyssop
Magnesium	200 mg daily	
Malic Acid	250 mg. 3X daily	
MSM	500 mg. 3X daily	
Multi-Vitamin/Mineral	6 caplets daily	In liquid solution with B12, biotin
Natural Progesterone Cream	1/3 teaspoon daily	With pregnenolone, DHEA
Niacinamide	1000 mg twice daily	
Quercetin	400 mg twice daily	With vitamin C
Vitamin B6	200 mg daily	
Vitamin C	Individual bowel tolerance**	With bioflavonoids (quercetin, rutin, proanthocyanidins)

* the FDA recommends that pregnant women not exceed 10,000 IU of vitamin A daily

** to determine individual dosage, on the first day take 1,000 mg hourly until diarrhea occurs, then reduce the dosage to just below that for individual daily dosage. Vitamin C is not toxic in large doses, but must be taken throughout the day to benefit. Divide dosage into three or four times a day.