

Treating Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue: Effective Options for a Hopeful Future



Effective Treatment Requires an Integrative Approach

- Holistic approach - treat the whole person
- Treat the underlying causes and symptoms
- Access to a variety of treatment modalities for integrative care
- Ensure all systems are balanced and functioning properly

Background: FM/CFS Statistics

- Fibromyalgia (FM) afflicts 8 to 12 million people in the United States
- 15 million Americans suffer from fatigue-related conditions
- Predominately affects women between ages of 35-54, but affects men too
- Complex syndromes involving multi-system disturbances and abnormalities
- Poorly treated by the standard 8 to 15 minute doctor's visit
- Diagnosis can be challenging

American Journal of Medicine

FM/CFS are both physically and emotionally devastating.

"The stress of dealing with an illness in which one looks physically well, has a normal physical examination, and normal laboratory test results is significant. The illness is frequently associated with strained relationships between spouses, other relatives, employers, teachers, health professionals, and insurance companies."

Why the Controversy?

- \$\$\$ - Health and disability insurers can avoid paying out billions of dollars if they can maintain that these syndromes are not real or physical
- Approximately 75% of those affected are women
- Average time allotted to the doctor per patient visit is 8 minutes
- Insurance companies often penalize the doctor for doing testing/treatment
- No accepted specific lab tests. Same problem initially occurred with Lupus, RA, Polio, MS, Lyme, etc.
- Bias against “Complementary” modalities which are essential in treating FM & CFS

The Medical Literature has the Data

- These are legitimate conditions with a true physiologic basis.
- Individuals have measurable hypothalamic and pituitary dysfunction and immune suppression.
- Dysfunction in one area cascades into dysfunction in another.
- The immune suppression results in opportunistic infections and yeast overgrowth.
- Treatment of the various abnormalities simultaneously leads to overall improvement.

Fibromyalgia and CFS are Two Branches of the Same Tree

- Both involve the inability to recover properly from exertion
- Chronic Fatigue is primarily characterized by the profound fatigue
- Fibromyalgia is primarily characterized by the severe, unremitting pain
- Both share most all causes and characteristics

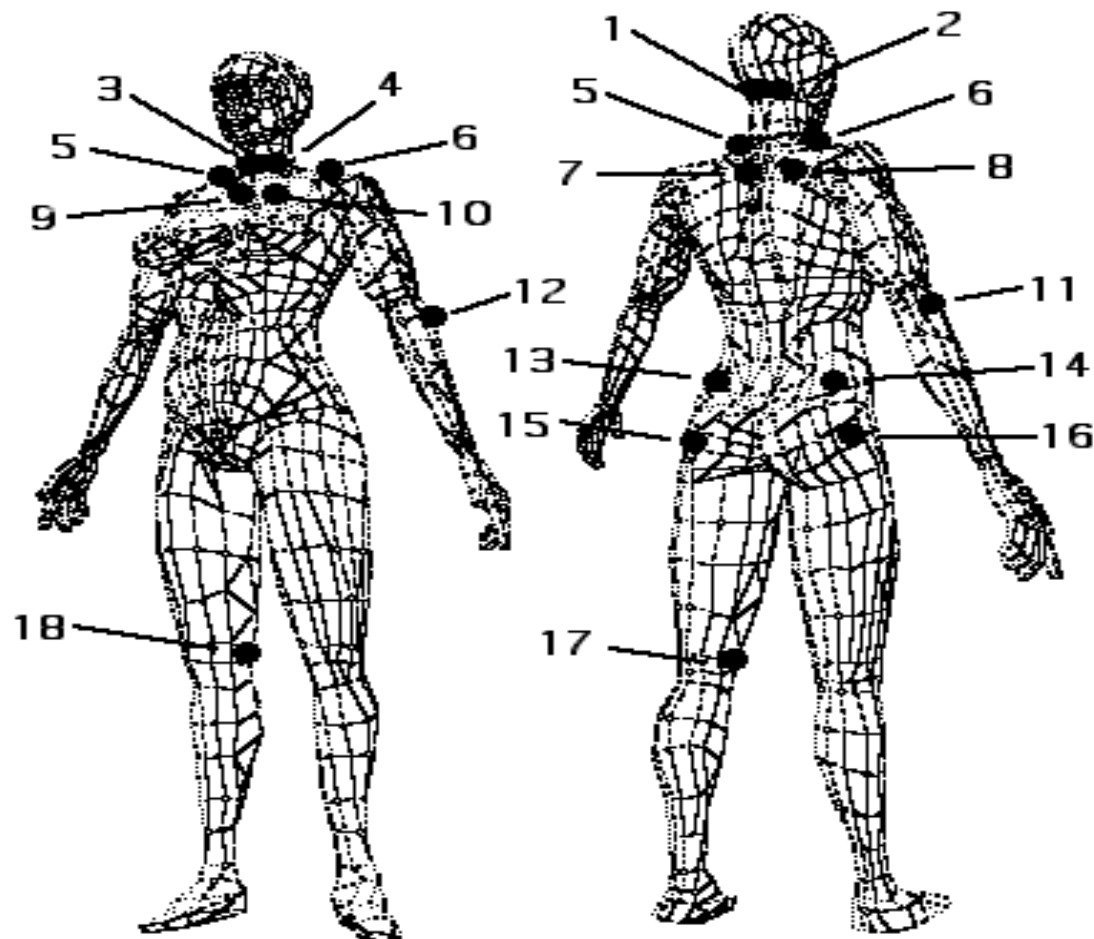
What is Fibromyalgia?

- History of wide spread pain for at least 3 months
- Flu-like pain that can be severe and constant
- A constant feeling of exhaustion
- Muscle stiffness and pain
- Cognitive problems, often called "brain fog"

Fibromyalgia, definition

- Pain located on both sides of the body as well as:
 - above & below the waist
 - midbody
 - pain on at least 11 of 18 tender points

Tender Points



What is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome?

- Clinically evaluated, unexplained, persistent or relapsing fatigue not alleviated by rest
- Results in substantial reduction in previous levels of occupational, education, social or personal activity
- Also, present with 4 or more of the following:
 - Impaired short term memory or concentration that has resulted in substantial reduction in activity
 - Sore throat
 - Tender lymph nodes
 - Muscle pain
 - Multi joint pain without joint swelling or redness
 - Headaches
 - Unrefreshing sleep
 - Postexertional malaise lasting more than 24 hours

So, What happens when you have FM/CFS?

- You don't sleep well.
- You have to monitor your energy from day to day, hour to hour.
- You may have severe pain that pain relievers don't relieve well.
- You may have difficulty with memory and cognitive function.
- If you feel well one day and overdo, you may be out of commission for the next day or two.
- Often, you look fine so people think that you are lazy, crazy or stupid.

What Causes FM and CFS?

- Environmental stress
- Emotional and physical stress
- Infections
- Immune deficiencies
- Hormone deficiencies

What to Do?

- Addressing all of the different areas is critical
- Getting restorative sleep
- Balancing hormones (all the hormones)
- Getting good nutrition
- Treating infections if necessary
- Appropriate exercise
- Treatment of other unique problems

Patient Testimonial - Alison

- 25 years old, college graduate, starting career, very active in karate
- Suffered with FM and Epstein Barr since 1999
- Standard symptoms – body aches, fatigue (sleeping 4-16 hrs./night), struggled with daily activities, could not get out of bed
- PCP diagnosed her with Epstein Barr – was told to eat right, sleep more, and reduce stress
- Numerous physicians indicated everything was ‘normal’
- Rheumatologist diagnosed with FM in 2002 – offered pain medication only
- Researched condition and found FFC - has since resumed her normal activities and no longer suffering

Symptoms of Mitochondrial Dysfunction

- Inability to recover from exertion
- It's like you have your energy bank account with a really harsh bank that won't tell you your balance
- If you overdraft, your penalty is a day or two on the couch

How to Treat Mitochondria Dysfunction

- Proper sleep
- Supplement critical nutrients such as Acetyl – L – Carnitine, Glutathione, D-Ribose
- Nutritional IV's to flood the cells with nutrients

Normal Sleep

Normal sleep consists of 5 stages:

- 1 Alpha (“Chatty mind”)
- 2 Unconscious
- 3&4 Delta (“Restock the shelves and take out the trash”)
- 5 REM (“Dream sleep”)
- In FM and CFS people are often missing stages 3 & 4 and experiencing alpha wave intrusion, which prevents deep sleep

Sleep Disturbances

- Have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Wake up feeling tired, not refreshed
- Absence of Delta wave sleep leads to decrease in production of hormones and build of lactic acid
- Results in immune dysfunction and pain
- Inability for body to repair cells

Causes of Sleep Disturbances

- Hypothalamic sleep center not working
- Pain, needing to urinate frequently
- Day/night cycles switched
- Restless leg syndrome
- Snoring, sleep apnea, Upper Airway Resistance Syndrome
- Young children and pets
- Spouse that snores

How to Treat Sleep Disturbances

- Sleep Hygiene – no TV, dark cool room, routines
- Natural sleep enhancers
- Prescription sleep aids
- Cushioning on surface of bed
- Hot baths

Hormone Deficiencies

- All the body's hormones interact with one another
- When the body has been stressed, defense mechanisms take over that can cause adrenal exhaustion and thyroid dysfunction
- Menopause can be a trigger for some women

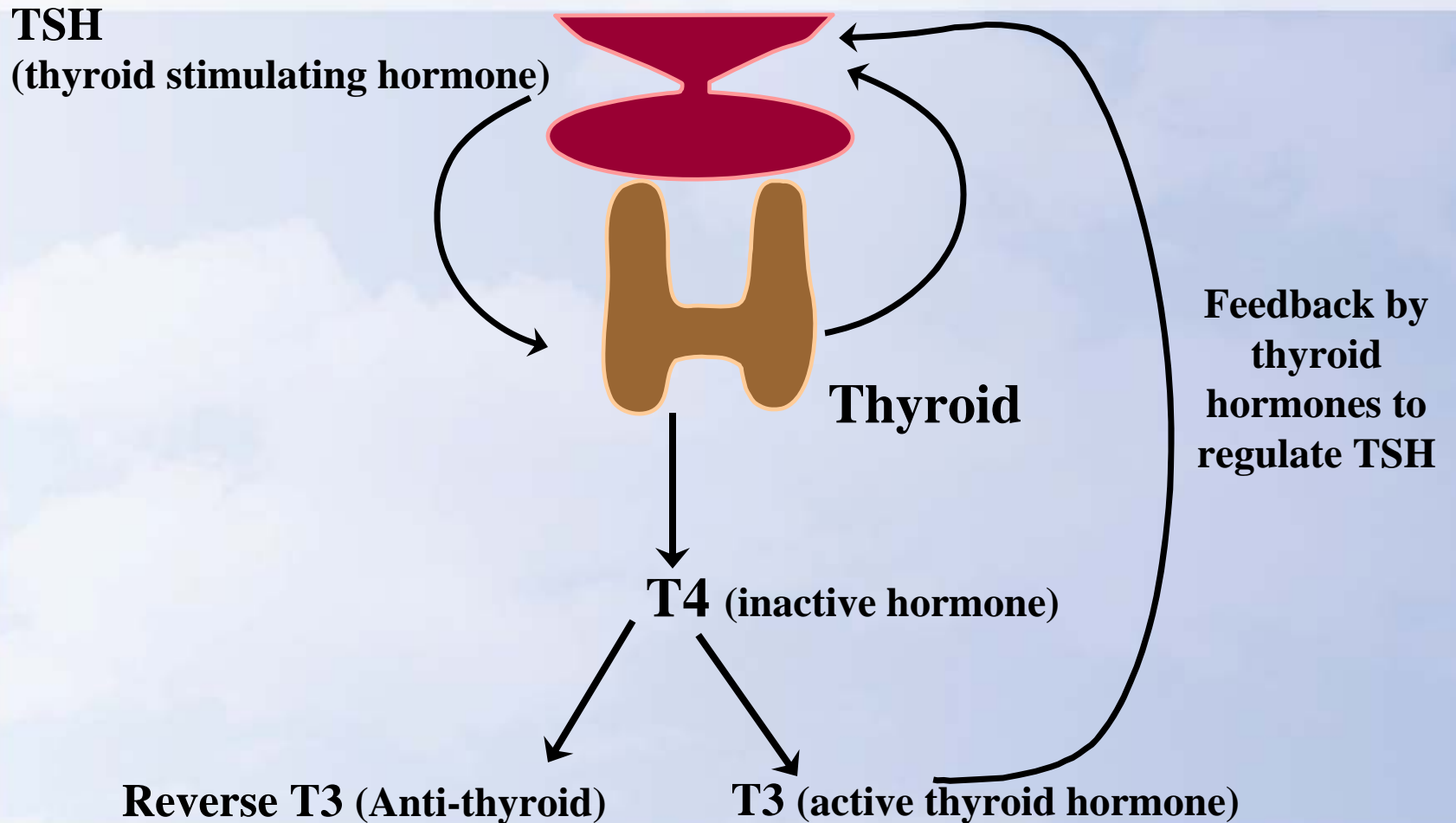
Symptoms of Hormone Deficiencies

- Fatigue
- Weight gain/increase in body fat
- Mood swings
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Loss of libido
- Hot flashes
- Concentration or memory problems “brain fog”
- Pain
- Low blood sugar
- Frequent infections

How to Treat Hormone Deficiencies

- Human bio-identical hormone therapy
- Natural supplementation
- Nutritional support
- Address fungal overgrowth
- Improve quality of sleep
- Restore overall health and vitality

Thyroid Physiology



Immune Deficiencies

- Cellular Mediated Immunity – decrease in natural killer cell activity, lymphocytes
- Decreased antibody function – low levels of immunoglobulins
- Clinical signs – frequent infections, difficulty recovering from infections

How to Treat Immune Deficiencies

- Nutrition
- Glutathione (IV or IM)
- Immunoglobulins
- Good sleep
- Supplements

Common Infections

- EBV / Epstein Barr Virus (“Mono”)
- CMV / Cytomegalovirus
- HHV 6 / Human Herpesvirus 6
- Parvo/ Human Parvovirus B16
- Yeast Overgrowth (Candida)
- Lyme Disease
- Mycoplasma
- C. Pneumonia
- Parasites

Symptoms of Infections

- Fatigue
- Achiness
- Joint pain
- Nerve pain
- Cognitive dysfunction “brain fog”
- Chronic sinusitis
- Bowel dysfunction

How to Treat Infections

- Fungal Overgrowth – treat with natural and prescription antifungals and probiotics while avoiding sugar (except chocolate) and antibiotics
- Bacterial Infections – treat with nutritional support, natural immune boosters, gamma globulin injections, antibiotic medications, anti-viral IVs
- Viral Infections – treat with nutritional support, natural immune boosters, gamma globulin injections, antiviral medications, anti-viral IVs
- Parasites – treatment is tailored to specific parasite that is found

Causes of Nutritional Deficiencies

- Consumption of sugar, white flour and processed foods
- High fat diet
- Poor food absorption
- Increase in nutrient losses
- Increase in needs secondary to illness

Concurrent Treatment Options

- IV and injection therapies
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Body work (massage, acupuncture, chiropractic)
- Emotional support (counseling & support groups)

IV Therapies

- Standard nutritional
- Infection treatment
- Memory booster
- Back and muscle relief

Injection Therapy

- Trigger point
- Energy
- B12
- Testosterone
- Immunoglobulin

Nutritional Tips

- If it's white, don't eat it!
- IV nutritional therapies
- Nutrient and enzyme replacement
- Increase water intake
- Decrease sugar intake
- Add salt IF you have low blood pressure
- Consider high protein, low carb diet

Exercise

- PACE YOURSELF!
- Yoga
- Walking
- Swimming
- Stretching
- Light free weights

Massage Therapy

- Therapist must be experienced in FM massage
- No deep tissue massage
- Focus on trigger points
- Drink plenty of water
- Use of healing oils with massage
- Incorporate stretching before and after massage
- Additional massage aids include: hot stones, warm moist towels, and heat pads

Support Organizations

- Social Networking Community-
www.Fibro360.com
- National Fibromyalgia Association –
www.fmaware.org
- Fibromyalgia Coalition International –
www.fibrocoalition.org
- CFIDS Association of America -
www.cfids.org
- Fibromyalgia Association UK –
www.fibromyalgia-associationuk.org

FFC Treatment Approach

- Component One Stabilize Symptoms
- Component Two Mitochondrial Enhancement
- Component Three Balance the Hormones
- Component Four Treat the Infectious Components
- Component Five Addressing Unique Etiologies
- Component Six Maintenance

What Makes FFC Different?

- Extensive lab testing
 - Test for underlying causes
 - Do more than the ‘standard’ blood tests
 - Results are interpreted differently
- Length of doctor visits
- Licensed physicians specialized in these conditions
- Integrative, customized treatment plan
- Proven, reliable outcomes – 83% of patients see improvements in symptoms after 4th visit

Conclusion

Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome are real, treatable conditions!



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