

[IMAGE]

Exercise Best for Fibromyalgia Symptoms

Fibromyalgia is a severe form of long-term musculoskeletal pain, characterized by fatigue and tenderness at multiple locations. It has only been recognized as a medical condition for a few decades. The cause of fibromyalgia is still unknown, and medical treatment using painkilling drugs or antidepressants has been unsuccessful.

In a 12-week study published in the *British Medical Journal*, over 130 fibromyalgia patients performed either progressive aerobic exercises (on stationary bicycles and treadmills) or relaxation exercises (stretches and relaxation techniques) twice per week in one-hour sessions. Self-rated pain and "tender-point counts" at 18 sites were determined initially, at the end of treatment, and three and nine months after treatment. Tender points, or "trigger points," are locations on patients that produce a sharp pain if pushed on during an examination.

Exercise-group patients were twice as likely to rate themselves "much better" or "very much better" than relaxation group members, both at the end of the 12-week sessions and nine months after cessation of therapy. Patients in the exercise group also showed larger reductions in terms of the number of tender points.

Aerobic exercise is an inexpensive, effective treatment for fibromyalgia. Women, the elderly, and those with rheumatoid arthritis or lupus are at the highest risk for this condition. If you have symptoms similar to those listed above that have lasted at least three months, you may suffer from fibromyalgia.

Reference:

Richards SCM, Scott DL. Prescribed exercise in people with fibromyalgia: Parallel group randomized controlled trial. *British Medical Journal* 2002;325, pp. 185-188.

To read more on the benefits of fitness, go to <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/sports.html>.

Page printed from:

http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=684&no_paginate=true&no_b=true