

FIBROMYALGIA

UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS & WHAT THE
FUTURE LOOKS LIKE



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Angelo Sambunaris, M.D., a Certified Physician Investigator (C.P.I.) by the Association of Physicians in Clinical Research, has been a leader in the field of clinical research for over two decades. He currently serves as Founder, CEO and Medical Director of Dr. Sambunaris & Associates, the Institute for Advanced Medical Research, is an Adjunct Professor at Mercer University College of Pharmacy.

Dr. Sambunaris has led more than 200 studies on the treatment of anxiety, depression, insomnia, and Alzheimer's disease, as well as research in smoking cessation, migraine headaches, Fibromyalgia, personality disorders, addiction and ADD in adults, adolescents, and children.

Dr. Sambunaris earned his medical degree from the University of Colorado in Denver. Further studies continued with an internship in the Department of Medicine, Hershey Medical Center of the Pennsylvania State University; Psychiatry Residency, Department of Psychiatry, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center; Psychiatry Career Resident Program (externship), General Adult Psychiatric Services, Colorado State Hospital; and Clinical Staff Fellow, Neuropsychiatric Research Hospital National Institute of Mental Health, Washington, D.C.

OVERVIEW

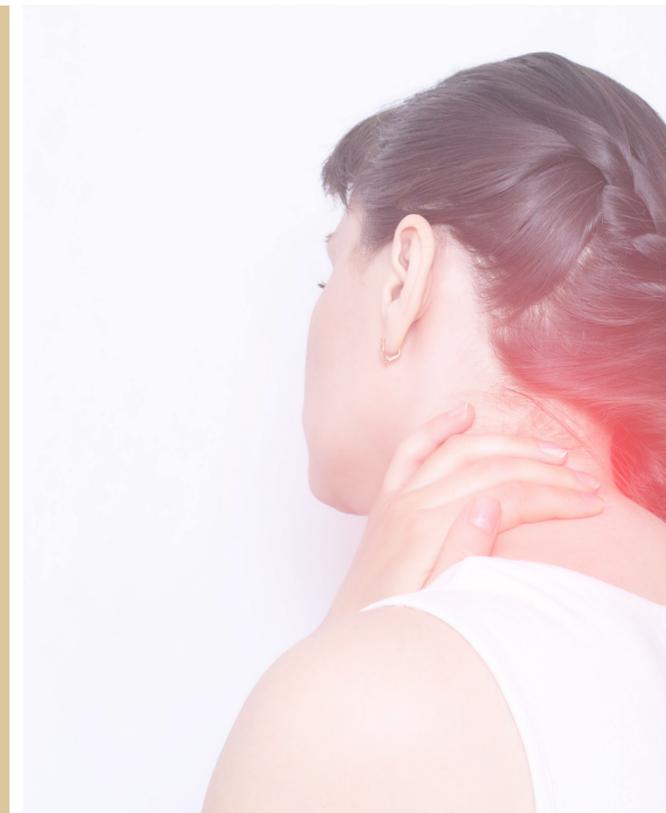


Fibromyalgia (FM or Fibro) can best be described as a chronic pain state attributed to disrupted nerve signaling.

It is a highly complex disorder with a variety of symptoms that come and go, making it difficult to identify, diagnose, and treat. The disease also includes specific pain points used in making a clear diagnosis.

Many of the symptoms of Fibro are similar to other medical conditions and it often co-exists with other conditions. These are the most common indicators of Fibromyalgia:

- *Insomnia and lack of restful sleep (waking exhausted)
- *Morning stiffness
- *Muscle knots, cramping, weakness
- *Brain fog



In addition to these physical symptoms, a physician will also look at 18 specific tender points.

Tender areas around regions in the neck, shoulder, chest, hip, knee, and elbow can help confirm a Fibromyalgia diagnosis.





Fibromyalgia:

Pain

By far, the most concerning and primary symptom of Fibro is the chronic, widespread, and debilitating pain that every patient experiences. This pain can vary in intensity, location, and presentation, ranging from stabbing and shooting to burning, throbbing and aching.

Fatigue

The second most serious symptom is severe fatigue. This is more than just being tired from a tough day; this is exhaustion that affects a person's ability to spend time with their family, perform at work, or enjoy the activities in which they want to participate.

Other medical conditions

A person with Fibro may also experience a wide array of medical conditions. This could not include, but is not limited to irritable bowel, bladder spasms, headaches / migraines, restless legs, rashes, itchy / burning skin, TMJ, Lupus, Arthritis, dry eyes or mouth, Anxiety, Depression, ringing in the ears, dizziness, vision problems, Raynaud's Syndrome, and sensitivity to touch, light, or sound.

3 TYPES OF FIBRO PAIN



Hyperalgesia

This is the most common type of pain. It is also the most studied. This type of pain occurs when normal responses are intensified.

For people with hyperalgesia:

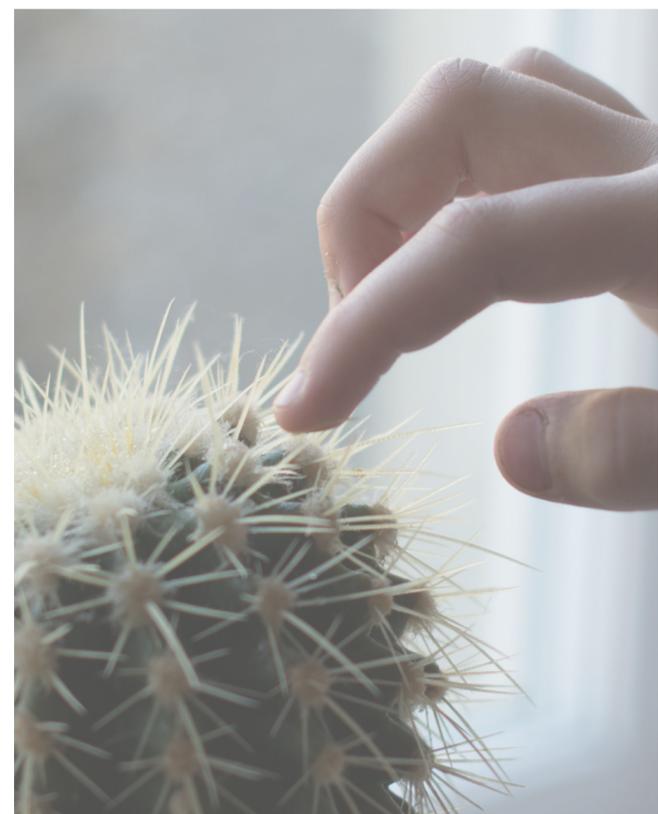
- A small bump feels like a hammer strike.
- There is pain everywhere.
- Minor injuries hurt ten times worse.
- A paper cut feels like someone stabbed you.

Allodynia

Allodynia is a type of abnormal, excruciating pain in response to things that normally would not be painful.

Does it hurt to:

- Shave your face?
- Give hugs?
- Put lotion on?
- Wear a hat, earrings, or necklace?



Paresthesia

Paresthesia refers to a burning or prickling sensation that is usually felt in the hands, arms, legs, or feet, but can also occur in other parts of the body.

The sensation, which happens without warning, is usually painless and described as tingling or numbness, skin crawling, or itching.

COMMON PAIN TYPES

Muscle Pain

This is the most common type of Anxiety pain, occurring when muscles are strained.

This pain can range from mild to severe, and the amount of pain can depend on posture. For example, people with Anxiety tend to slouch more. Therefore, they are more likely to experience muscle pain.

Pain and Cognition

Pain can have a negative affect on intellectual capabilities in the areas of attention span and memorization.

On the other hand, tasks that require intellectual thinking may reduce pain sensitivity.



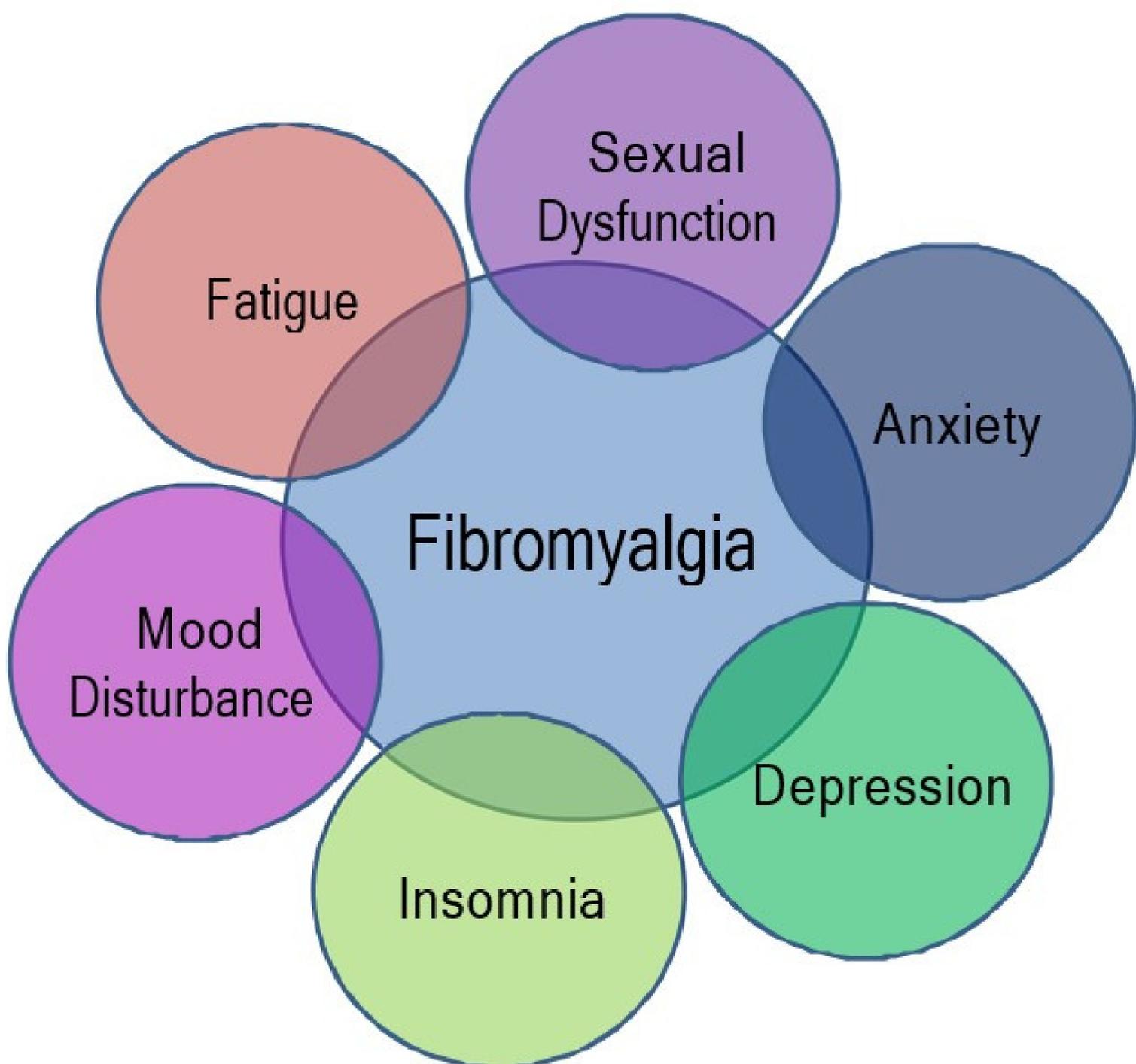
Experts predict that approximately
10 million

Americans have Fibromyalgia, most
of them women.



FIBRO AFFECTS EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE

While Fibromyalgia is one disorder, it is often linked to other disorders and symptoms that affect a person's overall well-being.



FIBRO PAIN AND OTHER DISORDERS

Depression can magnify pain. On the other hand, overwhelming pain can lead to Depression.

Chronic pain can keep a person tense and stressed out. This stress can then lead to symptoms that are commonly associated with Depression such as anger, chronic anxiety, fatigue, irritability, sleep disturbances, and decreased self-esteem.

Pain can lead to Anxiety. The stress that pain puts on the body can cause Anxiety but conversely, Anxiety can lead to pain.

Anxious people are often hyper-sensitive. This means that they notice every pain they experience, even if it is mild. When the mind is constantly focused on pain, the pain can feel worse.



THE PAIN SCALE



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FIBRO, CHICKEN POX, & THE HERPES SIMPLEX VIRUS

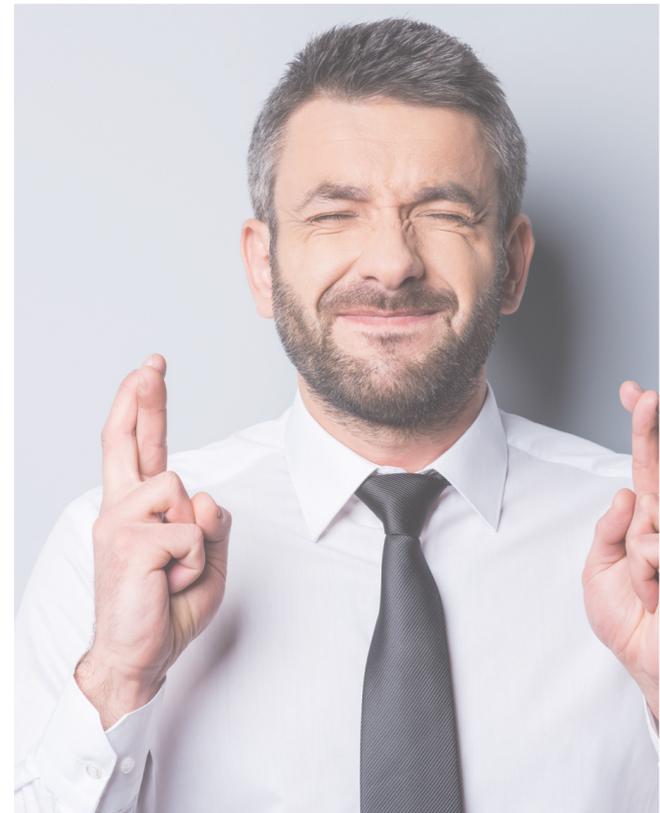
Anyone that has had Chickenpox, even if it was all the way back in childhood now lives with the risk of experiencing Shingles when they enter their later years. But why is that?

Chickenpox and Shingles are both caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV) with the difference being one's stage of life. Once infected by HSV, the body mounts an immune response and ultimately controls the infection but never entirely removes it from the body. HSV stays in a part of the nervous system called a dorsal root ganglion. It is believed that as long as an individual has a strong immune system, HSV will not reemerge.

There is exciting new research in the area of Fibromyalgia looking at the possible connection between Fibro and HSV infection as the cause of symptoms. Some researchers believe that the flare ups associated with Fibro might be similar to the Shingles flare ups that many experience -- the re-emergence of HSV leads to an immune response and inflammation all of which contributes to the pain, physical sensations, and the damage most often associated with Fibro.

The HSV-related viral hypothesis of Fibro has resulted in the development of a combination therapy approach now entering clinical trials which entails an antiviral medication coupled to an anti-inflammatory agent. The chronic, low-grade, lingering infection appears to fester, causing inflammatory damage to the body in both a localized and non-localized manner, making a proper diagnosis by a physician problematic. The national trial includes local clinics who are seeking volunteers.

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?



Take a wait and see approach

You are at no obligation to do anything about your pain...but it is not likely to get better over time.

Chronic pain may take away from your quality of life and it may impede you from achieving your full potential.

Contact your Primary Care physician

Maybe you have already been to a doctor and found that:

- You did not receive the one-on-one care you were looking for.
- The medication prescribed did not work.
- The medication prescribed was not well-tolerated.



If you are still looking for answers...

Call our office today!

YOU HAVE QUESTIONS WE HAVE ANSWERS

Currently, there are only three drugs approved for treating Fibromyalgia symptoms. Much more needs to be done in the area of research. There is no cure for Fibromyalgia and today's treatments focus on the management of the chronic pain.

Because of the severity and on-going nature of the pain, many people with Fibromyalgia become withdrawn from family and friends, and can even become Depressed.

Consider participating in medical research study.

Call today to receive a confidential evaluation for medical research at no cost and no obligation. You can:

- Play a more active role in your own healthcare.
- Receive expert medical care at a leading health research facility.
- Receive free physical examinations and diagnostic tests related to the clinical study.
- You may gain access to potential treatments that are not available to the public.
- You will help future generations suffering from similar medical condition.



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