

Fibromyalgia: An Underdiagnosed Chronic Pain Condition

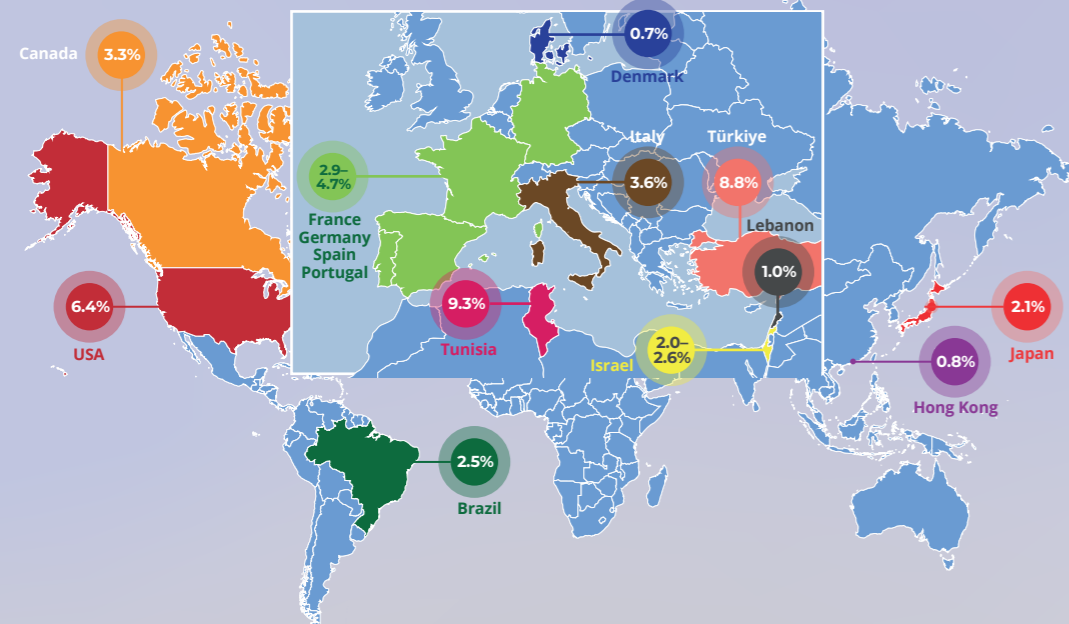
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- FM is a chronic nervous system condition that causes widespread pain and tenderness.
- FM is the third most common musculoskeletal condition in terms of prevalence, after back pain and osteoarthritis.
- People with rheumatological conditions are at a higher risk of having FM.
- Despite the high prevalence of FM, diagnosis often takes over 2 years.
- Patients see an average of 3.7 physicians during that time.

Estimated Prevalence of FM in Different Regions



Most Recent ACR Criteria for Diagnosis

| Criteria set | Measures of pain | Tender points | Associated symptoms | Diagnosis/classification |
|---|--|---------------|--|--|
| 2016 revisions to the 2010/2011 ACR FM diagnostic criteria. | Generalised pain defined as pain in at least 4 out of 5 regions (left upper region, right upper region, left lower region, right lower region, axial region). Pain in the jaw, chest and abdomen are not evaluated as part of the generalised pain definition. Use of WPI: a 0–19 count of the body regions reported as painful by the patient over the past week. | No. | SSS: a score of the sum of severity of three symptoms (fatigue, waking unrefreshed, cognitive symptoms), plus the sum of the number of the following symptoms occurring during the previous 6 months: headaches, pain, or cramps in the lower abdomen, and depression. | WPI ≥ 7 and SSS ≥ 5 ; or WPI 4–6 and SSS ≥ 9 . The presence of generalised pain. Symptoms have been present at the similar level for at least 3 months. A diagnosis of FM is valid irrespective of other diagnoses, and does not exclude the presence of other illnesses. |

Principal FM Symptoms

FM has a complex symptomatology. Symptoms can be divided into two groups: **cardinal features**, which include most characteristic FM symptoms that are pivotal for a diagnosis, and other **common features**.



Alert factors

- Ineffectiveness of current treatments
- Intrusive fatigue
- Poor concentration
- Hypersensitivities
- Widespread pain
- Poor refreshment from rest
- Longevity of symptoms
- Feeling overwhelmed



- 3x** annual direct medical costs for patients with FM compared with non-FM
- 2x** annual number of medical consultations compared with healthy individuals
- 50–75%** reduced work hours due to FM symptoms
- 51–80%** unemployment rates in patients with FM
- Social stigmas, cost to relationships, negative sense of self
- Estimates for the total annual direct costs per patient ranged from **\$1750 to \$35,920 in the USA** and from **\$1250 to \$8504 in Europe**

An Integrated Approach is Optimal

Key: ACR: American College of Rheumatology; CBT: cognitive behavioural therapy; EULAR: European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology; FIQ: Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire; FM: fibromyalgia; MDT: multidisciplinary team; SSS: Symptom Severity Scale; WPI: Widespread Pain Index.

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