

The Essential Fibromyalgia Toolkit: A One-Page Guide

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What is fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia is a **chronic pain disorder**, resulting from amplified sensory and pain signaling within the CNS, without identifiable tissue or nerve damage, now recognized as nociplastic pain.¹⁻⁴



Due to a lack of understanding and awareness surrounding the disease's complexity, diagnosis remains a challenge.⁵

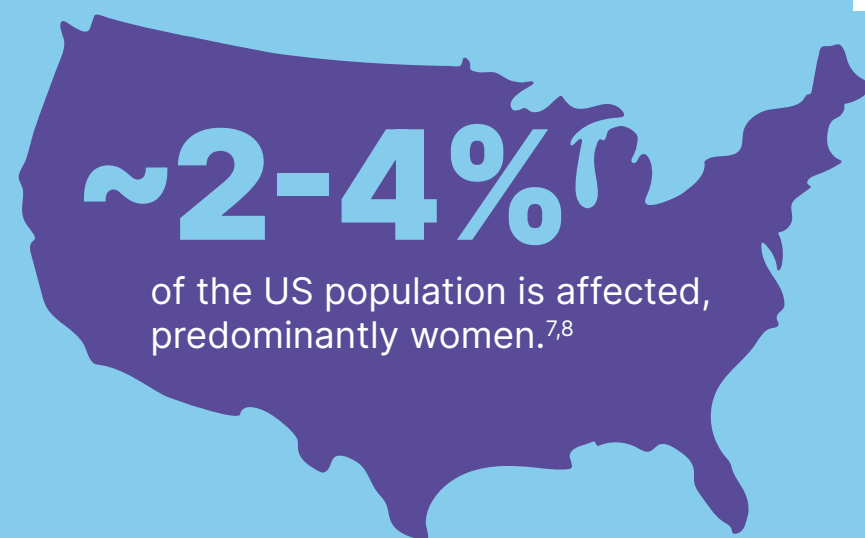
What to look out for

Three main symptoms of fibromyalgia:⁵⁻⁷

Other symptoms may include joint stiffness, depression, anxiety, migraine, and cognitive dysfunction, as well as digestive and urinary issues.^{6,7}



Non-restorative sleep



Distinguishing the three primary types of pain:^{1-4,9}

Nociceptive

Actual or threatened damage to tissue

E.g., Stubbed toe, appendicitis

Nociplastic

Altered pain perception in the brain

E.g., Fibromyalgia, endometriosis, lower back pain, long COVID, irritable bowel syndrome

Neuropathic

Impingement, lesion, or inflammation of a nerve

E.g., Sciatica, shingles

Timeline to diagnosis¹¹

Early diagnosis ~2 years

- Initial complaint
- First consultations with primary care provider

Late diagnosis >2-7 years

- Multiple visits to various specialists
- Potential misdiagnoses

Very late diagnosis >7 years

- Final fibromyalgia diagnosis
- Often after prolonged misdiagnoses
- Significant disease progression

Diagnosing fibromyalgia



Due to nonspecific features and a lack of clinical awareness,⁵ the time to diagnosis remains a significant challenge. Currently, the **mean time from initial complaint to diagnosis is 6.49±3.55 years.**¹⁰

The 2016 ACR fibromyalgia diagnostic criteria:¹²



Widespread pain in 4 out of 5 body regions



WPI score ≥7



SS scale score ≥5

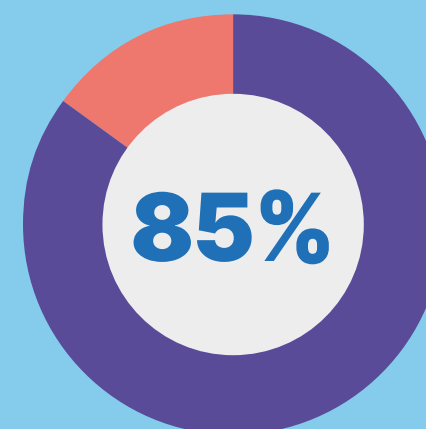


Or WPI score between 4–6 and SS score ≥9, with symptoms for at least 3 months

A diagnosis of fibromyalgia does not need to exclude other clinically important conditions.¹²

Pharmacotherapy approaches include:¹³

- Anti-convulsants
- Opiates
- SNRIs
- Tricyclic antidepressants and more



of patients fail first-line therapy (Based on primary physician market research commissioned by Tonix Pharmaceuticals)¹⁴

This is often due to a lack of response or poor tolerability/efficacy, especially in the longer-term.^{14,15}

Pharmacotherapy for core fibromyalgia symptoms

Sleep disturbance



Fatigue



Gabapentinoids

SNRIs

Pain



Patients are often treated with a variety of drugs, as no available drug improves the three primary symptoms.¹⁵

Abbreviations

ACR: American College of Rheumatology; COPC: chronic overlapping pain condition; CNS: central nervous system; SNRI: serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors; SS: symptom severity; WPI: Widespread Pain Index.

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