

## What Causes Fibromyalgia

By Dr. Mike Swierczynski

While research is being done everyday on fibromyalgia, the true cause is still not completely clear or understood. Some studies suggests a few theories such as:

• It is suggested that fibromyalgia sufferers have a serotonin deficiency or an increase in substance P (which regulates pain in the body and is found in the spinal fluid) and/or possibly some deficiency in their growth hormone levels. This boils down to a hormone problem.

• Possibly viral or bacterial infections but no one is really sure how or why or what in the body is actually affected.

• Hypothyroidism.

• Rheumatoid arthritis.

• Sleep disturbances - Some people believe that disturbed or altered sleep patterns may be a cause rather than just a symptom of fibromyalgia.

• Changes in muscle metabolism - such as the conditioning or deconditioning of a muscle or group of muscles. This can be caused from either overuse of a muscle or lack of use of a muscle. The muscle tissues may not receive or utilize oxygen in an efficient way.

• Decreased blood flow to a muscle (which decreases the amount of oxygen which is required for muscle activity and might contribute to a decrease in strength and fatigue). This could possibly lead to muscle tightness, spasm or trigger points which, when pushed upon, elicit pain. This theory goes along with the one above, changes in muscle metabolism.

• Genetics (family history) - this is vague and usually not well explained.

• Stressful or traumatic events. Many patients say that after such an event as a car accident, loss of a loved one, infections or illnesses or even breaking a bone is when their fibromyalgia symptoms began.

Some recent theories suggest that fibromyalgia is triggered from an abnormally functioning kidney or kidneys. Some studies suggests that fibromyalgia sufferers have a lower threshold for pain for unknown reasons. This means that pain is more easily registered in their brains.

In addition, some people think that poor diets or hypoglycemia brings symptoms on. Again, there is no conclusive research on these suggestions.

What does seem to be consistent with fibromyalgia patients is their symptoms begin after some traumatic type of event. The events probably don't cause fibromyalgia, but rather, the events may bring out an underlying physiological abnormality that is already present.

### About the Author

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