



Staying in Touch™



HELLO —

If you or a loved one has fibromyalgia, a major concern is finding some relief. Hopefully, the information in this newsletter will provide you with knowledge about some of the physiological challenges you face — and a proven therapy that can help.

The medical community has yet to learn enough about the condition to offer a cure and currently aims to manage the symptoms and alleviate some of the pain. Until a greater understanding of this syndrome is achieved, you can focus on those remedies that have been shown to bring relief.

If you have fibromyalgia, massage therapy should be a routine part of your health program. As a therapist, I've seen first-hand how much comfort those regular massage sessions can bring. The accompanying article will explain to you a bit of why massage helps to reduce the aches and pains associated with fibromyalgia.

My goal is helping others to have a healthier, more comfortable life. I look forward to working with you to improve your condition. Schedule an appointment today!

Fibromyalgia and massage

Those who suffer from the debilitating effects of fibromyalgia face a constant challenge — how can the painful symptoms be minimized? With an estimated 3 to 6 million fibromyalgia sufferers in the United States today, there is a steadily growing segment of our population that is seeking relief. Many sufferers have lived with the disease for over 7 years before a diagnosis was made.

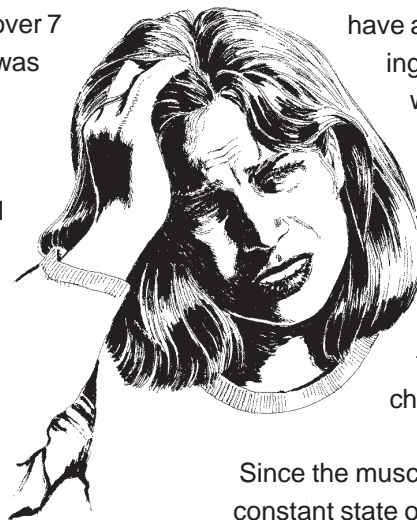
If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with fibromyalgia, you know that one of the biggest challenges is reducing the incessant aches that settle in the muscles, tendons and joints throughout the body. Just getting a good night's sleep becomes a daily dilemma.

Understanding the physiological effects of fibromyalgia on the body will help you to appreciate why massage therapy can be an effective treatment. A major complaint of fibromyalgia sufferers is the chronic aching primarily associated with the muscles. It is believed that the stress related with the condition contributes to the increased tension in the muscles that in turn leads to this persistent pain.

Whenever a muscle is used — whether it is for work or from worry — it increases its tone (*the degree of firmness or tension in the tissue*). If this increased tone is sustained, it places certain demands on the muscle. When the muscle is held in

this tensed position, it increases its need for oxygen, and subsequently, a need for more blood flow. In its current state, the muscle may not be capable of receiving this increased oxygen, which then manifests as aches and pain.

Additionally, the muscle may now have a much harder time disposing of its cellular wastes, which can exacerbate the painful condition. This is the beginning of a cycle of pain — increased muscular tension — pain that makes living with fibromyalgia such a challenge.



Since the muscles are now in a near constant state of increased tone, they begin to adapt to this new condition by changing structurally, developing areas of fibrous tissue. This leads to the affected muscles pulling on the tendons — the tough tissue that joins the muscle to the bone. The tendons now experience this same cycle of lack of oxygen, pain and change in structure as the muscles.

This constant condition of increased tone in the muscles burns a great amount of energy which helps to explain the steady fatigue that plagues most fibromyalgia sufferers.

Muscles in the body have opposing muscles. For example, one set of muscles contracts to bend your arm and an opposing set of muscles contracts to return it to (see **Fibromyalgia...** on back page)

Fibromyalgia ...

(continued from front page)

a straight position. When certain muscles begin to undergo the changes described above, it can have an adverse effect on their opposing muscle groups. While one muscle stays tense, the opposite muscle will grow weak, causing muscular imbalances throughout the body. These imbalances can contribute to a lack of coordination and uneven wear and tear on the joints.

You can see how these debilitating cycles can affect a fibromyalgia sufferer and worsen over time. Now, take a look at how regular massage sessions can help to bring relief.

When you receive a massage, it helps your body to function more optimally. For instance, those tense muscles are helped to relax and for a time return to a more normal state. Muscular release is the first step towards calming the mind and can help to reduce the body's wasting of energy.

The flowing strokes of massage help to increase circulation that in turn carries oxygen and nutrients throughout your

system and can aid in the removal of cellular waste and toxins.

Massage tends to bring a body into a more balanced, natural state. If you have fibromyalgia, this equates to a period of welcome relief.

What about results?

A study conducted by the Touch Research

Institute, Miami School of Medicine, in 1994 showed fibromyalgia responds well to massage. A portion of the study



group received 30-minute massages twice a week for five weeks. The rheumatologists that evaluated the results determined that only the group receiving regular massage experienced decreases in pain, fatigue, stiffness and improvements in the quality of sleep.

If you, a loved one, or an acquaintance have fibromyalgia, you should schedule a massage session (or better still, a series of sessions) to see for yourself how it can help.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call; I am here to help you!

Reference: *Fibromyalgia & Muscle Pain*, Leon Chaitow N.D., D.O. © 1998

Conditions and symptoms associated with fibromyalgia

Below are some of the common symptoms reported by fibromyalgia sufferers.
(* Note that depression is considered a consequence of the fibromyalgia.)

Balance problems	Headaches
Chronic fatigue	Impaired memory
Cold extremities	Muscle aches
Depression	Muscle twitching
Frequent urination	Sleep disorder

The content of this newsletter is not intended to replace professional medical advice. If you're ill, please consult your physician.