

Fibromyalgia

Being more active may help to:

- Reduce the pain associated with fibromyalgia
- Improve your sleep
- Increase your physical fitness so that your daily activities are less painful

Sometimes even light activity can be painful when you have fibromyalgia, but incorporating exercise into your daily routine may help ease the pain. You could go to the gym or simply increase the amount of physical activity within your day.

Before you begin incorporating physical activity to treat fibromyalgia pain talk to your healthcare provider about how your pain affects you. Work together to identify an exercise regimen that fits into your fibromyalgia treatment plan, and that suits your lifestyle.

Types of exercise for fibromyalgia: Studies show that physical activity is one of the most effective ways to manage fibromyalgia. Try one of these activities:

Walking: You can incorporate walking into your everyday life by walking around your home or yard, taking the stairs, walking in the mall, or parking at the far end of the parking lot.

Water-based activities: If you have access to a warm pool, activities such as, swimming, water walking, and aquarobics are a great place to start.

Stretching: Gentle stretching is good for you both physically and mentally. It can help improve flexibility, increase blood flow to the muscles, reduce stress and calm your mind.

Movement and breathing exercises: Less strenuous exercise such as yoga, tai chi, Pilates and Gyrotonic may help to increase your balance, core strength and flexibility.

Strength training: Light weight training or resistance training, where you use your own body weight to strengthen your muscles, may help to make you stronger and fitter.

Important things to keep in mind:

Start low and slow.

Start with a few minutes a day with one of the recommended exercises and stick with it.

Over time, gradually increase the amount of time and intensity.

Don't push yourself too much. If you overexert yourself, you may do more harm than good. Even if you feel great and want to do more in the moment, you could feel the pain and soreness the next day.

Pace yourself: If your physical ability is limited one day, don't overcompensate by overdoing it the next day when you feel more up for it. Find a balance of short periods of activity and rest that works for you.