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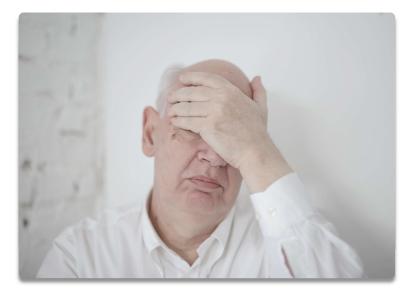
# Pain Is A Tricky Thing...

# It Helps Us To Avoid Excessive Injuries

### But It Can Sometimes Prevent Us From Living Life Fully

## Discovering How To Battle Fibromyalgia Is A Great First Step!

### What Is Fibromyalgia?



- Chronic & Complex Disorder
  - ► Affects 2% Of Canadians
- Symptoms Include:
  - Pain And Tenderness
  - ► Fatigue
  - Trouble Sleeping
  - Increased Sensitivity
- Cause Is Unknown

https://www.fmaware.org/fibromyalgia-symptoms/

#### **Theories About The Cause**

#### Malfunctioning Nervous System

- Heighted pain perception
- Ineffective Pain Modulation
- Overstimulation of "Fight Or Flight" System
- Possible Autoimmune Disorder
  - Causing Increased Pain Sensations
- Additional Factors:
  - ► Diet
  - Viral Infections
  - ► PTSD



https://www.physio-pedia.com/Fibromyalgia

#### **Risk Factors**

#### ► Usually Affects:

- ▶ Women (80-90%)
- Middle Aged Individuals
- ► At This Time:
  - ▶ No Known Racial/Ethnic Risk Factors
  - Can Run In Families (But Not Always)
- Having Other Medical Conditions Increases Risk...
  - Mood Disorders
  - Rheumatic Diseases



https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/fibromyalgia

### Diagnosis

- No Exact Test
  - Currently Being Studied
- Diagnosis Includes:
  - Medical History
  - Physical Exam
  - Ruling Out Other Conditions
- Diagnostic Criteria:
  - Widespread Pain
  - ▶ Generalized Pain In At Least 4 Of 5 Regions, Is Present
  - Symptoms Present For At Least 3 Months



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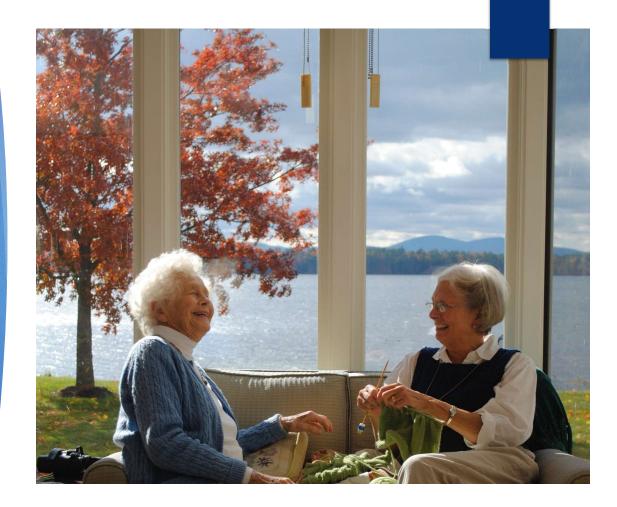
#### Treatment

- ► No Current Cure
  - Can Learn To Manage Symptoms
- ► Treatment Includes:
  - ► Exercise
  - Medication
  - Behavioral/ Psychological Therapy



#### Living With Fibromyalgia

- There Are Various Ways
  To Help Manage
  - ► Exercise
  - Education
  - Social Support
  - Therapy



#### Education

- Getting A Diagnosis Can Be Scary
  - But It's A Step Towards Healing!
- Knowing Can Help To Make Decisions
- Learning How It May Affect Our Life
- Discovering What Resources Are Available



#### **Social Support**



- Ensure You Have People To Support You
- Fibromyalgia Support Groups
  - Can Help You Discover Ways Others Have Managed
- Non-fibromyalgia Social Groups
  - Can Help You Discover Other Parts Of Living

### Therapy

- There Is A Lot Of Processing With A Medical Diagnosis
- Learn To Unpack Your Emotions
- Discover Ways To Move Forward
- Learn How To Change How You Experience Pain



#### **Exercise**

- Exercise Is Known For Many Benefits
  - One Of The Most Helpful Treatment Options!
- Helps Tackle Various Symptoms
  - ► Fatigue
  - Anxiety/Depression
- Start Slow At First
  - Symptoms Can Be Worsen By Overloading, Overstretching, Excessive Heat Or Cold
- Aquatic Therapy Is The Most Tolerable Form Of Exercise
  - ► In Warmer Water



https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18497301/



"Initially, I was overcome by the severity of the symptoms.... The pain, fatigue, sleep problems, and mental fog were overwhelming. I couldn't work or function. I would sit around in the rocker in agony, consumed by pain."

"I live with Fibromyalgia. live an empowered and fulfilling life despite that. I've gone from surviving to thriving. You can too!"

https://www.fmaware.org/i-am-more-than-my-diagnosis/

## Discover The Strength You Didn't Know You Had!