

Fibromyalgia (Pseudo) Support Protocol

Clinical Protocol to Support Healthy Physiology*



Fibromyalgia Syndrome versus Pseudo Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) is characterized by widespread pain, changes in pain processing, and heightened awareness and sensitivity to stimuli (touch, light, and sound).^{1,2} FMS often accompanies complaints of fatigue, sleep disorders, cognitive deficits, depression, anxiety, irritable bowel syndrome, headaches, bruxism, and Raynaud's syndrome.^{1,3,4} The most pronounced FMS symptom that differentiates it from other conditions is the widespread tenderness and extremely low tolerance to sensory stimulation, also known as allodynia. This lowered threshold is caused by abnormalities in the central nervous system (rather than a primary or soft-tissue dysfunction), described as central sensitization.³⁻⁵

There are no laboratory or diagnostic tests to diagnose FMS; it relies solely on symptomatic criteria and medical history.¹ Prospective research reveals that only 34% of patients diagnosed with FMS hold an accurate diagnosis. The other 66% of patients have other causes for their widespread pain and fatigue, despite being diagnosed with FMS.⁶ This misdiagnosis is referred to as "Pseudo Fibromyalgia" — "Pseudo" (Latin) meaning "false."⁴

Numerous conditions can be associated with fatigue, muscle tenderness, and pain (not necessarily widespread). These conditions can include anemia, hypothyroidism, Lyme disease, myofascial referred pain, autoimmune disorders, and rheumatoid arthritis. Pseudo fibromyalgia may also be associated with nutritional deficiencies, an unhealthy gastrointestinal (GI) microbial environment, and dysfunctions involving the mitochondria, adrenals, liver detox, neurotransmitters, and muscles and joints.^{3,4}

This clinical protocol is designed to support patients with pseudo fibromyalgia through lifestyle techniques, diet, and specific nutrients shown to promote healthy physiology.*

Diagnostic Biomarkers and Clinical Indicators of Fibromyalgia (Pseudo)

- In-depth patient history and physical examination by health-care practitioners with experience in the differential diagnosis of FMS and other musculoskeletal conditions²
- Assess the 2016 revisions to the 2010/2011 American College of Rheumatology (ACR) preliminary diagnostic criteria for fibromyalgia¹
- According to the ACR criteria, a diagnosis of FMS should not be made until it is confirmed that no other condition would explain a patient's pain or related symptoms.² Perform lab work including, but not limited to:²⁻⁴
 - Complete red blood cell count and white blood cell differential
 - Thyroid panel (total and free T3 and T4, TSH, and thyroid antibodies)
 - Standard blood chemistry
 - Metabolic chemistry panel
 - C-reactive protein and erythrocyte sedimentation rate
 - Lyme and rheumatic profile, if warranted
 - Salivary cortisol
 - Metabolomics Spotlight™ functional organic acids test

Therapeutic Diet and Nutritional Considerations

- Correct any nutritional deficiencies, particularly ones associated with fatigue and widespread tenderness, such as the B vitamins, magnesium, and malic acid (malate).³
- Encourage a whole-food, low-glycemic dietary approach. Dysregulated glucose metabolism is associated with fatigue and "brain fog."⁴
- Avoid excessive intake of processed foods and refined carbohydrates to promote a healthy GI microbial environment and intestinal barrier function.⁴ Avoid any suspected food sensitivities, intolerances, or allergies.
- Support healthy liver detoxification with cruciferous vegetables and antioxidant- and fiber-rich foods, such as cauliflower, cabbage, and broccoli.⁴

Lifestyle Interventions

- Recommend psychological counseling, such as cognitive behavioral therapy. Past emotional and physical trauma is associated with the onset of FMS or pseudo fibromyalgia symptoms, such as widespread pain, sleep disorders, or cognitive deficits.^{2,3}
- Suggest stress management techniques, such as light exercise, deep breathing, yoga, or meditation. Light physical activity may promote cognitive health and healthy pain responses.^{1,3}
- Advise patients on proper sleep hygiene. Sleep disorders are associated with unhealthy pain responses and fatigue.^{1,4}



Supplement Protocol



Hypothyroidism:

Thyroid Synergy™

Dose	2 capsules per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Thyroid Synergy™ is a top-quality, all-in-one formula for the nutritional support of thyroid function.* The non-stimulating adaptogenic botanical American ginseng (<i>Panax quinquefolius</i>) helps maintain healthy cortisol, blood glucose, and insulin metabolism, along with a balanced conversion of peripheral thyroid hormone.* Essential vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients work synergistically to provide a premium thyroid product in just two capsules per day.*		

Hypoadrenia:

Adrenotone™

Dose	3 to 6 capsules per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Adrenotone™ is a combination of standardized adaptogenic herbs and nutrients that are known to contribute to rejuvenating the adrenals.* This product is designed to help support healthy cortisol metabolism, hypothalamic and pituitary function, and catecholamine production.*		

Mitochondrial Dysfunction:

Mitochondrial NRG™

Dose	4 capsules per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Mitochondrial NRG™ is a formulary blend of nutrients, nutraceuticals, botanicals, and Krebs cycle intermediates designed to support efficient mitochondrial metabolism and energy production to promote vitality.* Mitochondrial NRG™ was designed to support the function of the mitochondria, "the powerhouse of the cell."* This formula may be appropriate for anyone wishing to promote overall cellular and tissue health, and mitochondrial function.*		

Mito-NR™

Dose	2 capsules per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Mito-NR™ is uniquely formulated to support cellular energy production and healthy aging.* This formula contains clinically relevant amounts of Niagen®, a form of nicotinamide riboside chloride (NR), coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10), and geranylgeraniol (GG). NR is a variation of vitamin B3 (niacin) and is a building block to nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD+). NAD+ is found in every living cell and is essential to many important cellular processes, including energy production.		

Anemia:

Ultra B12-Folate

Dose	1 capsule per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Ultra B12-Folate is a unique formula that combines vitamin B12 (cobalamin) with the patented folate derivative, Quatrefolic®. These two vitamins work synergistically, improving methylation and helping to promote balanced concentrations of homocysteine.* The premium B12 in this product comes from equal amounts of adenosylcobalamin and methylcobalamin.		

Ferrochel®

Dose	1 capsule per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Ferrochel® iron chelate is a potent iron supplement that is extremely well tolerated by the gastrointestinal system. Ferrochel® is a premier chelate from Albion Advanced Nutrition that has a very high absorption rate. It is safe for use by pregnant and lactating women, teenagers, and adults. Unlike most iron preparations, it will not result in constipation or gastric upset.*		

Gastrointestinal Health:



GI Revive® Capsules or Powder

Dose	1 tsp powder or 7 capsules per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	GI Revive® offers comprehensive support for optimum gastrointestinal health and function.* The lining of the gut must have proper permeability and integrity not only so it can absorb nutrients, but also to prevent toxins, allergens, and microbes from gaining access to the bloodstream. The powder version of GI Revive® can be mixed into any beverage or functional food powder, and it can be used to help support optimal gastrointestinal health and regularity.*		

ProbioMed™ 100

Dose	1 capsule per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	ProbioMed™ 100 is a highly potent, shelf-stable, dairy-free probiotic formulation containing 100 billion CFUs per serving. It consists of 10 of the most highly-researched probiotic strains, with each strain and specific CFU count being fully disclosed. These are robust strains that are capable of surviving the harsh journey to the intestines and are able to attach to the intestinal walls, where they can grow and function effectively to support gastrointestinal health.*		

Neurotransmitter and Pain Inhibition Dysfunction:

5-HTP Synergy™

Dose	1 capsule per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	5-HTP Synergy™ is a synergistic formula of 5-hydroxytryptophan and vitamin B6 per serving for supporting overall neurotransmitter metabolism by providing precursors of serotonin.* 5-HTP readily enters the blood-brain barrier; however, conversion into serotonin requires the cofactor vitamin B6, which is included in this formula. 5-HTP Synergy™ may be used during the day to support a healthy mood and normal appetite, or it may be used at bedtime to support sleep.*		

NeuroCalm™

Dose	2 capsules per day	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	NeuroCalm™ is designed to promote the activity of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) and serotonin, which may help support healthy moods, cravings, and feelings of calm, satiety, and satisfaction.* NeuroCalm™ contains PharmaGABA®, a form of GABA naturally manufactured through a fermentation process, which is considered more effective than chemically produced synthetic forms. Support for the production of calming neurotransmitters is also provided by L-theanine and taurine.*		

Musculoskeletal/Myofascial Syndromes:



MyoSedate™

Dose	3 capsules 2 times daily	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	MyoSedate™ is a blend of calming herbs and minerals designed to support healthy muscle relaxation.* This product contains valerian root, passionflower, and skullcap, which may promote quality sleep without causing drowsiness or sleep hangover.* The addition of calcium and magnesium, as minerals involved in muscle contraction and relaxation responses, provide further comprehensive support for healthy muscle relaxation.*		

MagneGel™

Dose	Massage onto affected areas as needed	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	MagneGel™, Designs for Health's transdermal magnesium gel, is a pure, 100% natural solution of magnesium chloride. This primary ingredient comes from high-quality magnesium salt derived from the depths of the earth's interior — all from the ancient Zechstein seabed in Europe. This transdermal delivery system is highly efficient, allowing for rapid assimilation in the body.		

ArthroSoothe™ Cream

Dose	Massage onto skin as needed	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	ArthroSoothe™ Cream is a soothing topical lotion that utilizes methylsulfonylmethane (MSM), glucosamine, chondroitin, hyaluronic acid (HA), and a blend of herbal extracts. This product provides a warming effect followed by a surface-cooling sensation to help support occasional joint and muscle discomfort.		

Inflammatone™

Dose	2 capsules 3 times per day in between meals	Duration	Ongoing as needed
Formula Highlights	Inflammatone™ is a combination of herbs, nutrients, and proteolytic enzymes for modulating the inflammatory response, supporting the natural clearance of proteins like kinin and fibrin, and supporting healthy lymphatic drainage.* The ingredients in Inflammatone™ provide natural support for a healthy inflammatory response and help protect against oxidative stress.*		

For a list of references cited in this document, please visit:

<https://www.designsforhealth.com/api/library-assets/literature-reference---fibromyalgia-protocol-references>

Dosing recommendations are given for typical use based on an average 150 pound healthy adult. Health-care practitioners are encouraged to use clinical judgement with case-specific dosing based on intended goals, subject body weight, medical history, and concomitant medication and supplement usage. Any product containing botanical substances has the potential for causing individual sensitivities, appropriate monitoring, including liver function tests (LFT) is recommended.

For considerations regarding herb-drug and nutrient-drug interactions, please refer to reliable, evidence-based resources such as the Natural Medicine Database or Stargrove MB, Treasure J, McKee DL. *Herb, Nutrient, and Drug Interactions: Clinical Implications and Therapeutic Strategies*. St. Louis, MO: Mosby-Elsevier; 2008.

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*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.