Fibro Fix Expanded Exercise and Self-Treatment Guide

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The Natural Path to Lifelong Health

The Fibro Fix Exercise and Movement Supplemental Self-Treatment Guide

FIBROMYALGIA:

Fibromyalgia syndrome (FM) is a condition which is often misdiagnosed by healthcare practitioners. Patients with FM often present with multiple symptoms. Two symptoms which are most prevalent include global, widespread pain and fatigue. According to Dr. David Brady, "the hall mark symptom that differentiates FM from most other medical conditions is the pronounced tenderness to even the mildest palpation or physical touch all over the body". A person presenting with FM may not only have a heightened sensitivity to pressure, but may also be hyper-sensitive to heat and electrical stimulation. In addition to wide spread, global pain and fatigue Dr. Brady states; "patients with FMS may also present with sleep disorders, cognitive deficit, irritable bowel and bladder syndrome, headache, Raynaud's syndrome, bruxism and atypical patterns of sensory dysethesia". A recent, randomized controlled trial which involved 130 women, 22 to 64 years of age, found that resistive exercise did improve the health status of those tested having FM. In the conclusion of the study, Larson, A., et al. states "person centered progressive resistive exercise was found to be a feasible mode of exercise for women with FM, improving muscle strength, health status, and current pain intensity when assessed immediately after the intervention". The following is a group of resistive strengthening exercises devised specifically for the FMS patient population.

Exercise and mobilization:

The following stretching, strengthening and mobilization exercises target common, painful regions of the body, particularly those responsible for weight bearing activity. These areas include the neck (cervical spine), mid back (thoracic spine), low back (lumbar spine), hips and knees. Along with the responsibility of bearing weight, these areas, particularly the neck and low back, are also susceptible to pain due to physical stress resulting from the need to adapt to common work environments and activities. A good example of this, due to advances in technology, is the need to spend more time in a hunched over sitting position while performing computer related tasks. Most often, while working on a computer for an extended period of time, our normal, healthy postural alignment is altered, substituted by a more rounded and flexed (bent over) posture. This can result in chronic pain and decreased mobility. Along with physical stress, emotional stress can induce muscle spasm in these areas producing muscle pain, decreased mobility, fatigue and weakness. When these muscles are in a weakened state they no longer are able to support the spine and provide for a natural, healthy posture. This can lead, over time, to degenerative joint dysfunction.

The following are a group of exercise and mobilization techniques which target these common areas of pain and related symptoms such as stiffness, muscle tightness, and restricted range of motion. With all exercises, you need to increase or decrease the number of repetitions according to tolerance and comfort level. Proper breathing during exercise is important and enhances the outcome of the exercise. Diaphragmatic breathing is a recommended breathing technique to incorporate while exercising. When utilizing diaphragmatic breathing the stomach expands during the inhalation phase (breathing in through the nose) and the stomach deflates during the exhalation phase (breathing out through the

mouth). This can be practiced by simply placing hand on stomach and feeling the stomach rise and fall when taking a breadth. Apply the same breathing technique during all exercises.

Equipment Recommended:

*Towel
*Foam Roll
*Exercise Ball
*Exercise Floor Mat (Optional)

1. **Neck Retraction and Shoulder Press**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Upper Back and Shoulders

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: Lying on back, knees bent, arms stretched out horizontally from side with palms facing upward, with a bolster or rolled towel placed under base of neck: Gently press head and shoulders in a backward direction (toward exercise mat or floor). Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breaths. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of 10 repetitions.

2. **Neck Roll**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Upper Back and Shoulders

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: While lying on back, with knees bent and arms stretched out behind head, foam roll placed under base of neck, pelvis lifted off mat or floor: Starting from the base of your neck slowly roll upper body in an upward direction until foam roll is underneath shoulder blades (scapula). Hold this position

for 1-2 seconds, followed by rolling upper body in a downward direction to the starting position. Throughout exercise maintain head and neck in a slightly extended position. Continue this motion while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing for approximately 3-5 minutes. Adjust exercise time based on tolerance and comfort level.

3. **Shoulder Blade Press and Head Tilt**

Targeted Body Parts: Head, Neck, Shoulders, Upper Back, and Mid Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

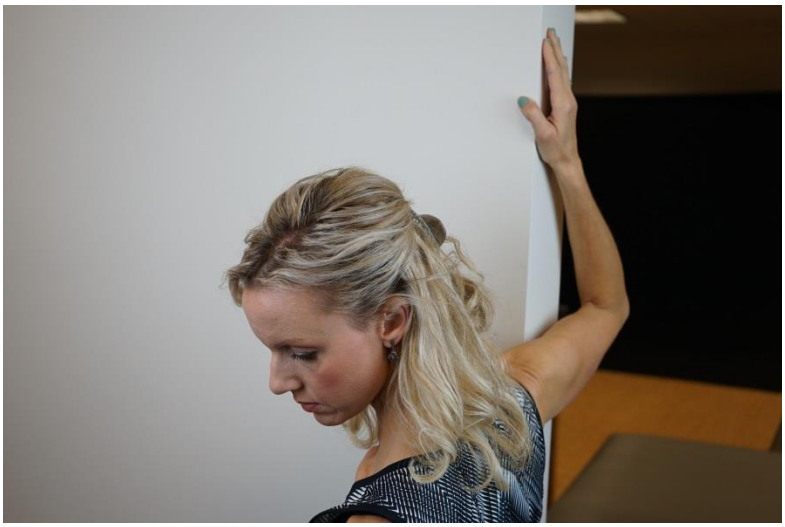
Instructions: Standing with feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, palms faced outward: Gently squeeze shoulder blades together and tilt head back at a 45-degree angle toward the left side (left ear toward left shoulder). Hold for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return head to starting position. Next, squeeze shoulder blades together and tilt head back in a 45 degree angle toward the right side (right ear toward right shoulder). Repeat same breathing sequence. Bring head to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

4. Shoulder Door Frame Stretch

Targeted Body Parts: Shoulder, Neck, and Chest

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: Facing doorway, standing on right side of door parallel to door jamb, place right arm on jamb slightly above head with elbow slightly bent. Take one small step forward with left foot and with head slightly extended backwards, rotate chin over left shoulder. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of 10 repetitions. Face opposite side and follow same sequence with left arm on door jam, followed by taking a small step with right foot and rotating chin over right shoulder.



5. Seated Ball Rotation

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Upper Back, Mid Back and Shoulders

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: Seated in chair, with low back in a slightly extended (arched) position, with small exercise ball held in both hands, rotate to right side, positioning hands and ball just behind right hip. With head slightly extended backwards rotate chin over right shoulder. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to starting position. Repeat the same sequence to the left side. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

6. **Mid Back Forward Flex**

Targeted Body Parts: Mid Back, and Lower Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture

Instructions: Kneeling on exercise mat, with chest on ball, roll forward until arms and shoulder blades are extended over ball. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

7. **Mid Back Side-Bend**

Targeted Body Parts: Mid back, Lower Back, and Shoulders

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility, and restore healthy, normal posture.

Instructions: In a standing position, feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, pelvis slightly rotated backwards and arms at side, slide fingers of left hand down toward outside of left knee while bringing the right arm overhead and side-bending the upper body to left. Head and neck position is slightly extended backward and rotated upward to right. Hold position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to the starting position. Repeat the same sequence side-bending to the right. This is considered one repetition. Repeat for a total of 10 repetitions. This exercise can also be performed sitting in a chair with ankles, knees and hips bent at ninety degrees.

8. Low Back Rotation with Ball

Targeted Body Parts: Low Back, Mid Back, and Hips

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: Lying on back with rolled towel placed under base of neck, arms spread out horizontally from side, with ball under knees and knees aligned with shoulders: Rotate ball to the left until feeling a minimal stretch (pull) in low back muscles. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to starting position. Repeat same sequence to the right side. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of 10 repetitions. To hold ball in place while doing exercise, slightly squeeze in with both legs.

9. Low Back Roll

Targeted Body Part: Low Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: Lying on back with knees bent, arms placed overhead and hands placed on mat or floor, with foam roll placed under base of low back: Roll body in a downward direction until foam roll is underneath mid back. Hold this position for 1-2 seconds, followed by rolling body in an upward direction until the foam roll is underneath the low back. During this exercise maintain low back in a slightly extended (arched position). Continue this exercise for 3-5 minutes while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing. Adjust exercise time based on tolerance and comfort level.

10. Hamstring Stretch

Targeted Body Parts: Hips and Low Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture

Instructions: Lying on back, rolled towel placed under base of neck, pelvis slightly rotated backward, right knee bent and left leg straight. With strap or belt around left foot and toes pointed toward head, pull left leg in an upward direction until feeling a minimal stretch (pulling) sensation in the left hamstring region. Hold this position for five diaphragmatic breadths and return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat same sequence with right leg, placing strap around right foot and keeping left knee in a bent position for a total of ten repetitions.

11. Hip Rotation

Targeted Body Parts: Hips, Outside Upper Thigh (Illio-Tibial Band), Low Back, and Mid Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: While lying on back and rolled towel placed under base of neck, bring right knee in an upward direction and with left hand, gently rotate right hip toward left side of body. Stop when feeling a minimal pull / stretch sensation to outside of right hip and leg. The head and neck are rotated toward right shoulder. Hold this position for two minutes while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing. Increase or decrease the duration of this exercise based on tolerance and comfort level.

12. Lateral Hip Roll

Targeted Body Parts: Hip and Outside Upper Thigh (Illio-Tibial Band)

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instructions: While lying on right side and foam roll placed underneath right hip, roll toward knee, holding this position for 1-2 seconds followed by rolling toward hip. Continue this motion while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing for approximately 3-5 minutes. Increase or decrease duration of this exercise based on tolerance and comfort level.

13. Horizontal Shoulder Stretch

Targeted Body Parts: Shoulder, Upper Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

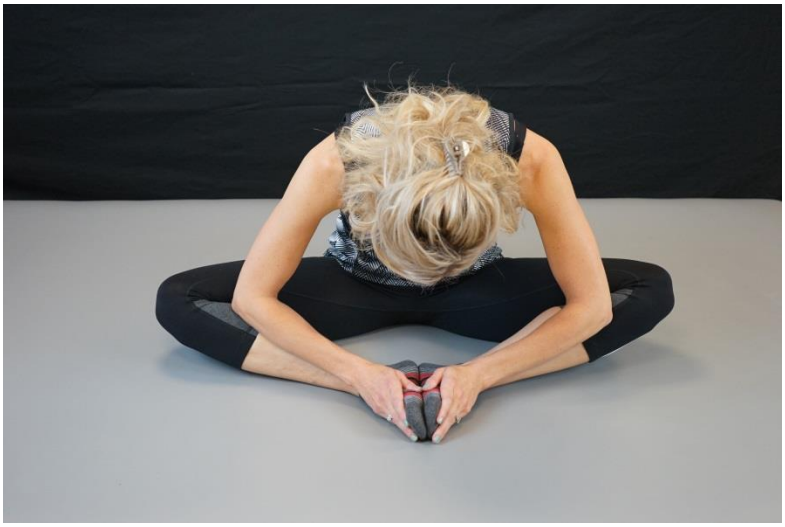
Instruction: In the standing position with feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent, clasp right elbow with left hand, bring right arm horizontally across body toward left side while rotating chin over left shoulder. Apply a slight pull with left hand to right elbow to slightly increase upper back rotation to the left side. Hold for three slow diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat the same sequence bringing the left arm horizontally across the body and rotating the chin over the right shoulder.

14. **Chin Tuck In Sitting**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Upper Back, Left and Right Groin

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instruction: In a sitting position with souls of feet pressed together and elbows resting on knees, tuck chin down into chest while bending head forward until feeling a slight pulling sensation at neck and upper back. With elbows resting on knees gently push down until feeling a slight pulling sensation in the groin. Hold this position for three slow diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.



15. **Mid Back Extension on Ball**

Targeted Body Parts: Chest, Upper Back, Mid Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal healthy posture.

Instruction: With ball under mid back and both arms crossed, resting on chest, extend both arms by reaching overhead, slightly rolling upward on ball. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

16. **Upper Body Press Up**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Chest, Mid Back, Low Back, Pelvis

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instruction: While lying on stomach and arms positioned shoulder width apart and resting on elbows, gently press upper body upward extending neck and head (looking upward) and at the same time gently pressing pelvis downward. Stop when feeling a minimal pull (stretching sensation) in mid and lower back. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. Return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of 10 repetitions.

17. **Double Knee Toward Chest**

Targeted Body Parts: Low Back

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instruction: With rolled towel placed under base of neck, lying on back with knees bent, clasp hands behind knees and bring both knees up toward chest. Pull knees toward chest until feeling a minimal stretching sensation in low back. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breaths. Return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

18. **Upper Thigh Stretch**

Targeted Body Parts: Hip, Knee and Ankle

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore healthy, normal posture.

Instruction: Standing next to wall with left hand placed on wall and stretched above head and right knee bent, clasp right foot with right hand and pull right foot back and upwards toward buttocks until feeling a minimal stretch in thigh muscle. Hold this position for three slow diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Return to starting position. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat the same sequence with left leg.

19. **Hip Extension with Ball**

Targeted Body Parts: Pelvis, Hip

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instruction: With exercise ball placed under right thigh, left leg placed forward and knee bent, bring arms forward (so that hands are resting on the floor) until feeling a minimal stretching sensation to right upper thigh and hip region. Hold this position for 15 seconds while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing. Repeat the same sequence with ball placed under left thigh to stretch left thigh and hip region. Increase or decrease stretching time based on tolerance and comfort level.

20. **Inner Thigh Stretch**

Targeted Body Parts: Pelvis, Hip,

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instruction: While lying on back with arms spread out horizontally from side, palms facing upward and right knee bent, slide left leg outward until feeling a minimal stretch sensation to left inner thigh and groin region. Hold this position for two minutes while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing. Repeat the same sequence for stretching right inner thigh / groin region. Increase or decrease stretching time based on tolerance and comfort level.

21. **Standing Calf Stretch**

Targeted body parts: Ankle, Knee

Purpose: To decrease pain, reduce muscle tightness, improve mobility and restore normal, healthy posture.

Instruction: With hands on hips and legs positioned shoulder width apart, place left foot in front of right foot and bend left knee forward until feeling a slight stretching sensation to right calf. Hold this position for one minute while engaged in diaphragmatic breathing. Repeat the same sequence for stretching the left calf by placing the right foot in front of the left foot and bending the right knee forward.

Strengthening Exercises for those with "Classic" fibromyalgia, as well as those with "Structural" Myofascial/Trigger Point Pain*:*

Diaphragmatic Breathing Technique used with strengthening exercises: When body part is at rest (starting position) diaphragmatic inhaling slowly through the nose (feeling the stomach rise). When exerting force (body part moves and muscle is contracting) diaphragmatic exhaling slowly through the mouth (feeling the stomach fall).

1. **Shoulder Elevation with Resistive Band**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Shoulder, Upper Back, Mid Mack

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: With feet positioned shoulder width apart and standing on one end of resistive band with right foot to anchor band, elevate right arm upward above head (parallel with right side of body). Hold this position for two to three seconds. Return arm to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat the same sequence, standing on one end of the band with the left foot and holding the opposite end with the left hand and elevating left arm.

2. Shoulder Horizontal Elevation with Resistive Band

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Shoulder, Upper Back, Mid Back

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: In a standing position, with feet positioned shoulder width apart, standing on one end of resistive band with left foot and holding other end of band in the right hand, raise right arm across body in a diagonal direction. Hold this position for two to three seconds. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat same sequence on opposite side, raising left arm diagonally across the body.

3. Shoulder Shrug with Resistive Band

Targeted Body Parts: Shoulders, Arms

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: In a standing position, with feet positioned shoulder width apart, standing on resistive band to provide an anchor and holding both ends of the band, roll shoulders in an upward and backward direction. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

4. Arm Press with Resistive Band

Targeted Body Parts: Shoulder, Chest

Purpose: Increase Strength and Mobility

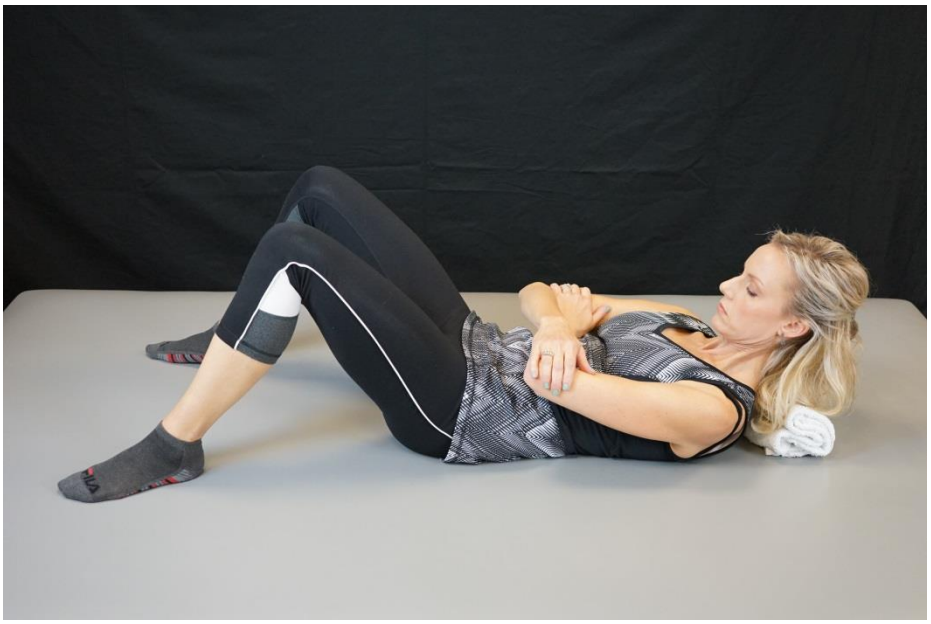
Instruction: In a seated position, with legs shoulder width apart and knees bent approximately 90 degrees, resistive band wrapped behind back of legs, while holding both ends of the resistive band push arms forward while at the same time moving hands together. Hold this position for two to three seconds. Return arms to the starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

5. **Modified Sit Up**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Chest, Abdominals, Mid Back, Low Back

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: Lying on back, towel roll placed under base of neck, knees bent and arms crossed over chest, slowly bend head and neck forward followed by elevating shoulders (and shoulder blades) off mat. Hold this position for two three seconds. Return to starting (resting) position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.



6. **Modified Diagonal Sit UP**

Targeted Body Parts: Neck, Chest, Abdominals, Mid Back, Lower Back

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: Lying on back with towel roll placed under neck, knees bent, arms crossed over chest, slowly bend head and neck forward followed by lifting shoulders (and shoulder blades) off mat while bringing right elbow toward left knee. Hold this position for two to three seconds. Return to starting position. Repeat sequence bringing left elbow toward right knee. Return to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions.

7. **Straight Leg Raise**

Targeted Body Parts: Hip, Knee, Abdominal

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: While lying on back and towel roll placed under neck, right knee bent and left leg straight tighten thigh muscle by pushing back of knee downward followed by lifting left leg up to approximately 6 inches off the exercise mat. Hold this position for two-three seconds. Return leg to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat the same sequence lifting the right leg while the left knee is kept in a bent position. This exercise can be initiated without weight and progressed by adding 1 and 2 LB ankle weights. Increase or decrease resistance based on tolerance and comfort level.

8. Hip Abduction in Side-lying

Targeted Body Parts: Hip, Low back Thigh, Abdomen,

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: Lying on left side, with left arm in a bent position, lift right leg approximately 6 inches. Hold this position for two to three seconds. Return leg to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat the same sequence for exercising the left leg while side-lying on the right side. Add ankle weights starting with 1 LB and progressing to 2 LB's based on tolerance and comfort level.

9. **Hip Extension**

Targeted Body Parts: Hip, Low back, Thigh

Purpose: Improve Strength and Mobility

Instruction: Lying on stomach, with right knee bent, lift right thigh off of mat. Hold this position for two to three seconds. Return thigh to starting position. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions. Repeat the same sequence for exercising the left leg. Add ankle weights starting with 1 LB and progressing to 2 LB's based on tolerance and comfort level.

Proper Postural Alignment for those with "Classic" fibromyalgia, as well as those with "Structural" Myofascial/Trigger Point Pain:

Our spine consists of four regions including the cervical (neck), thoracic (mid back), Lumbar (low back) and sacrum making up part of the pelvic region. Normal, healthy spine alignment includes a natural lordotic (inward) curve existing both at the neck and low back. Maintaining this natural alignment allows the body to move in the most efficient, least restrictive manor. Contrary to this, when the spine is malaligned, in other words there is a loss of this lordotic curvature, the body loses its ability to move in the most efficient manor, often resulting in spinal pain and muscle weakness which can radiate from the spine into the arms and legs. There are medical conditions which alter normal postural alignment such as scoliosis, arthritic conditions and disc derangement. Even if these conditions exist, a postural maintenance program can be put into practice to improve postural health. The following guide should be used to maintain a healthy, natural postural alignment.

Sitting: 90-90-90 rule:

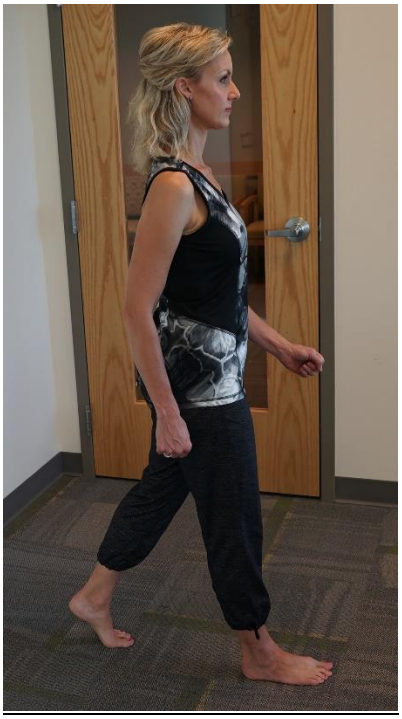
When in a seated position the best posture to maintain is one that allows for and promotes the natural lordotic (inward) curve that exists both at the neck (cervical) and low back (lumbar) spine. The 90-90-90 rule pertains to maintaining the position of 90 degrees at the ankles, knees and hips. Positioning the joints in this manor will decrease the tendency of slouching when in a seated position. To maintain this alignment the shoulders should be pulled back and the head should be positioned so that the ears are aligned with the shoulders. The pelvis should be slightly tilted toward the thighs.

Standing:

When standing, the feet should be positioned at a distance shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent and the pelvis slightly tilted backwards (posterior pelvic tilt). Shoulders should be pulled back causing the chest to push forward and the head should be pulled back and slighted tilted upward causing the ears to align with the shoulders. Maintaining this posture will distribute body weight evenly and maximize balance. If standing in the same position for an extended period of time it's important to periodically shift weight from one leg to the other. Examples of prolonged standing in one position would include food preparation in a kitchen or working on an assembly line. This can be accomplished by placing one foot on a small stool, approximately 6 inches off the ground and alternating left and right foot every three to five minutes.

Walking:

When walking the head is slightly tilted upward, shoulders pulled back with ears aligned with shoulders. The pelvis is slightly tilted backward (posterior pelvic tilt), with a heel to toe walking pattern. The arms are relaxed at your sides with slight motion of right arm moving with left leg and left arm moving with right leg.



Postural Exercises for those with "Classic" fibromyalgia, as well as those with "Structural" Myofascial/Trigger Point Pain:

1. **Shoulder Press:**

Standing against a wall, with feet positioned shoulder width distance apart and knees slightly bent, gently push head and shoulders against wall. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

2. **Chin Tuck / Occipital Glide:**

In standing position, with feet positioned shoulder width distance apart and knees slightly bent, tuck chin toward chest followed by gently gliding chin and head backward. Hold this position for two to three seconds. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

3. **Anterior Pelvic Tilt:**

In the sitting position, applying the 90-90-90 rule, rotate your pelvis anteriorly (in a forward direction). This will cause your back to slightly arch. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

4. **Posterior Pelvic Tilt:**

While lying on your back, knees bent, and feet resting flat on the exercise mat (or floor), gently rotate your pelvis in a downward direction causing your pelvis to flatten against the mat. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

5. **Scapula Retraction:**

In the standing position with feet shoulder width apart, head tilted upward and ears aligned with shoulders, gently squeeze scapula (shoulder blades) together. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

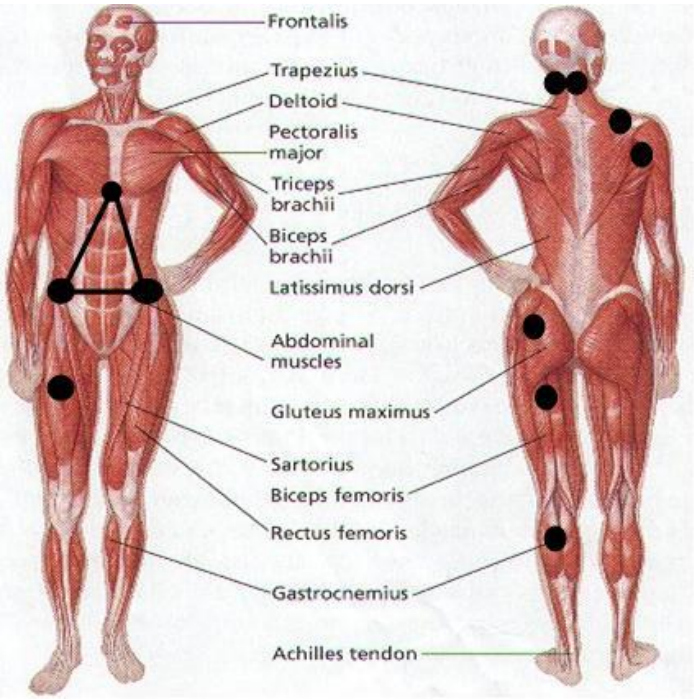
6. **Neck and Shoulder Extension:**

In the standing position with feet positioned shoulder width distance apart while arms behind back holding an exercise stick/pole, extend head and arms in a backward direction. Hold this position for three diaphragmatic breadths. This is one repetition. Repeat this exercise for a total of ten repetitions.

Myofascial/Trigger Point Pain Therapy: (Most appropriate for those with "Structural" issues, as opposed to "Classic" fibromyalgia).

Fascia is a thin layer of connective tissue found throughout the body. Fascia has many functions some of which include providing support to our musculoskeletal system and organs, allows for separation of organs, vessels and other bodily tissues, provides a structural framework in which bodily systems can operate and acts as a transport mechanism for bodily chemicals. Myofascia ("myo" from Greek origin meaning muscle) refers to fascia that surrounds and attaches to muscle fibers. A myofascial trigger point can be described as an extreme localized tender point located in a taught band of muscle and fascia tissue. When a trigger point is palpated it elicits immediate "jump like" pain followed by a pattern of referred pain. A practitioner palpating the trigger point usually describes it as being the size of a pea.

The common areas of the body where trigger points are found include the neck, upper back, mid back, low back, hips and legs. Applying specific pressure point techniques coupled with gentle exercise targeting the trigger point and tight muscle have been found to alleviate and shut down myofascial trigger point pain. A trigger point which is not treated may lead to muscle pain and weakness, decreased joint range of motion and impaired coordination. The following is a diagram of where these points are commonly found on the body along with pressure point techniques that can be applied to these areas.



<u>Pressure Techniques Applied to Trigger Points and Taught Muscle Fibers: (For myofascial pain NOT classic fibromyalgia)</u>

Equipment Recommended:

*Small, compressible ball
*foam roll

1. **Body Part: Neck**
   Targeted Muscle: Upper Trapezius
   Position: Standing

Instruction: With back pressed against a wall, depending on which side of neck pain is experienced, place small, compressible ball or foam roll behind neck. With legs slightly bent, move body in an upward and downward direction by slightly bending and straightening knees followed by shifting weight side to side to roll neck in a horizontal direction. Alternate rolling in a vertical and horizontal direction for approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes. This technique can also be applied while sitting in a chair with ball placed between wall and neck while moving in a vertical and horizontal position.

2. **Body Part: Neck, Upper Back**
   Targeted Muscle: Levator Scapulae
   Position: Standing

Instruction: With back pressed against a wall, depending on which side of upper back pain is experienced, place ball or foam roll behind upper back. With legs slightly bent, move body in an upward and downward direction by slightly bending and straightening knees followed by shifting weight side to side to roll upper back in a horizontal direction. Alternate rolling in a vertical and horizontal direction for approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes.

3. **Body Part: Mid Back**
   Targeted Muscle: Erector Spinae
   Position: Lying on Back

Instruction: To apply pressure to painful area place roll behind upper back /neck. Lying on back with knees bent roll mid back in an upward and downward direction by slightly bending and straightening knees. Continue this rolling technique for approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes.

4. **Body Part: Low Back**
   Targeted Muscle: Musculo-Aponeurosis of Lumbar Spine
   Position: Lying on Back

Instruction: To apply pressure to painful area place roll under low back. While lying on back with knees bent, roll low back in an upward and downward direction by slightly bending and straightening knees. To assist in rolling extend arms behind head and push in an upward and downward direction with hands. Continue this rolling technique for approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes.

5. Body Part: **Buttocks**
   Targeted Muscle: Gluteus Medius
   Position: Semi Side-lying

Instruction: To apply pressure to painful area, if treating the right buttock, place roll under right hip. Position your body mid-way between lying on back and side-lying (at a 45 degree angle) on the right side. The left leg will be in a bent position, right leg straight and right elbow bent with your body

weight resting on the ball or roll and elbow. Roll buttock in an upward and downward direction by shifting weight on elbow, using your elbow and forearm to slightly push and pull your body weight. This will promote a rolling type pressure on the painful area. Continue this rolling technique for approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes. Repeat same sequence for treating the left buttocks.

6. Body Part: **Calf**
   Targeted Muscle: Gastrocnemius / Soleus / Plantarus
   Position: Long Sitting

Instruction: To apply pressure to painful area place roll under calf. In a long seated position, arms extended behind the body, with left leg straight, right leg bent, push with right foot and extended arms to roll calf in an upward and downward direction. Continue this rolling technique for approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes. Repeat the same sequence for treating the right calf.

Authors:

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