

HUMAN PERFORMANCE CENTRE

Want to Know More About Fibromyalgia & Nutrition? We Can Help!

Fibromyalgia is a chronic pain condition that affects roughly 2% - 3% of the population. There are more women than men suffering from Fibromyalgia. Besides chronic pain in muscles and joints, individuals often experience fatigues, trouble sleeping through the night, difficulty concentrating for long periods of time and mood disorders including depression. Fibromyalgia is difficult to diagnose and individuals can suffer with one or more symptoms for years before a diagnosis can be made.

Weight gain is commonly seen in individuals with Fibromyalgia due to limited physical ability or low desire to exercise due to mood fluctuations.

Treatment with medication of Fibromyalgia is aimed to help relief some of the associated symptoms such as pain, insomnia and depression. There is no cure and besides medical treatment, a patient centered approach by several other health disciplines can help maximize functionality and quality of life such as physical therapy, relaxation therapy, behavioral therapy and also nutrition therapy.

Three key points can be addressed by a Registered Dietitian; eating well, maintaining a healthy weight and staying active. A healthy, well balanced diet can attribute significantly to a better quality of life by feeling more energetic, sleeping better, being able to exercise more often and also feeling less moody.

Ensure you eat at least three balanced meals per day, possible some snacks of desired. Refer to Canada's Food guide and it's a four food groups. A balanced meal is made up of foods from at least three food groups. Eating regularly helps to keep up your energy levels, so you can go on with our daily activities.

Drink at least 9-12 cups of fluid per day. Limit sugary drinks such as juice and pop. If you have trouble sleeping, limit your caffeine intake especially in the later part of the day.

Include healthy fats in your diet from fish such as salmon, and plant sources such as avocados and nuts. Opt for high fiber foods in your diet ranging from whole grain foods, plenty of fruit and vegetables, legumes, and nuts. Opt for vegetarian protein options several

times a week including legumes, tofu, and nuts. Limit your salt and sugar intake. Foods highest in salt and sugar are highly processed convenience foods.

Exercise regularly. Aim for 30 minutes of aerobic exercise such as walking, swimming or cycling 2-3 times per week. Resistance exercise such as strength training a couple of time per week can aid with your wellbeing. Physical activity is a great mood enhancer and also leaves you left energized.

Many people with fibromyalgia are open to trying alternative therapies including supplements and special diets. So far, research is inconclusive on the effectiveness of herbal supplements or special elimination diets, but many individuals report feeling relief from one or more symptoms with certain supplements or on certain diets. Be cautious when taking supplements and check with your pharmacist or doctor first as some herbal supplements can interfere and reduce the effectiveness of some medication.

Source: Canadian Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Fibromyalgia, Dietitians of Canada.



Julia Besner, RD

*Julia Besner is a registered dietitian and is available for appointments at the Human Performance Centre.
Tel: 738-8299*



738-8299
3636 Westfield Road