

through the structure of the parts of the body that hurt remains normal and undamaged.

## HOW IS FIBROMYALGIA TREATED?

There is currently no cure for fibromyalgia, but treatment options are available to help relieve some of the symptoms and make the condition easier to live with. This can be a combination of medication – such as antidepressants and painkillers, talking therapies – such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and counselling, and lifestyle changes – such as exercise programmes and relaxation techniques. Your doctor will walk this road with you and identify the most suitable option for you.

## LIVING WITH FIBROMYALGIA

Living with fibromyalgia almost always forms the cycle below and can heavily impact the quality of one's life. With medication to ease muscle pain and improve sleep, muscle relaxants, pain relieving drugs and physiotherapy, a person can be able to live a modest life unhampered by the condition.



### Drugs

Your doctor can prescribe medication to help with pain, sleep disturbance or depression associated with fibromyalgia. However, most of these drugs can cause side-effects, particularly the stronger painkillers. The drugs may include opiate drugs, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory gels, anti-depressants and those that can help with sleep disturbance. You may have to experiment with a few drug regimes before you settle for the one that gives optimum results. Note that these drugs do not cure fibromyalgia and do not usually get rid of all the pain. **Discuss the best**

**balance between pain relief and side-effects with your doctor.**

### Physical Therapies and Exercises

Physiotherapy will help improve your posture, stretch and relax your muscles and with time become more active. Occupational therapy will help you manage your everyday routine without increasing your pain or wearing yourself out. Exercises help reduce muscle tension and stiffness thus helping deal with the pain. Face yourself starting any activity gradually increasing the pace and tension as you continue.

### Diet and Nutrition

Though there is no specific diet for fibromyalgia it is recommended that you maintain a healthy weight and eat a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.

### Sleep

With fibromyalgia, disturbed sleep is almost always the norm. Do not aggravate the same by having erratic sleep patterns. Establish and faithfully follow that routine, avoid alcohol, tea, coffee, smoking and watching TV late at night. Keep a notebook by your bedside to note any thing that you think of to do the next day and then put it out of your mind.

### Learn about your condition and understand it.

Do as much research as you can about fibromyalgia and if there are support groups on the same in your locality join them and share your experiences with other people.

### Stress

Deal with any stress or unhappiness at home or at work and try to live with minimal stress at all times.

**Fibromyalgia hurts and the pain you feel is real. For its management, expert advice or emergency medical attention, consult us on 0727 935706.**

**Arthritis Hurts**

Talking helps

Don't suffer in silence

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## NAIROBI ARTHRITIS CLINIC

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## FIBROMYALGIA

**F**atigue

**I**rritability

**B**rain fog

**R**estless legs

**O**verlapping syndromes

**M**uscle & Joint pain

**Y**ou never feel good

**A**nxiety & Depression

**L**oss of control

**G**rief & Worry

**I**mmune Dysfunction

**A** Lifetime fight

**A chronic pain illness**