

## Definition of Fibromyalgia Massage—

Massage can be a wonderful relief for those suffering from fibromyalgia. If someone suffers from fibromyalgia, many types of massage may be too much for them and they can literally be laid up in bed for three days recovering! Therefore, it's important for patients to find a therapist certified in fibromyalgia massage.

What is fibromyalgia? It is a chronic pain disorder that causes widespread pain and fatigue throughout the musculoskeletal system. Migraines and a feeling of heat at the base of the neck are common complaints. Fibromyalgia is normally diagnosed by a rheumatologist, and some patients are eligible to receive disability payments from the government. Approximately 2%-4% of people in the United States have this syndrome and most sufferers are female. There are 18 tender points on the body, and patients feel pain in 11 or more of these 18 points. Sufferers also can have sleep problems, migraines, and IBS. For example, for healthy people, between 11pm-2am, hormones are released that begin cellular repair. However, fibromyalgia sufferers are often unable to sleep at these hours. Their bodies struggle night after night to repair tissue and find relief.

Until quite recently, doctors thought fibromyalgia was psychosomatic and not a real disorder. However, physical measures have found real differences in the bodies of sufferers. For example, patients have very low levels of serotonin or serotonin receptors, have low growth hormone levels (needed for muscle repair), low levels of norepinephrine and dopamine, and three times the amount of Substance P (it tells the body how much pain it feels).

One of the treatments that often can help sufferers is regular massages. Fibromyalgia massage is quite different from Swedish massage. It focuses on bringing energy away from the neck and head, gently relieves trigger points and tender points, loosens fascia, and improves circulation and sleep.

I have studied fibromyalgia massage and have helped several people with Fibromyalgia feel much better, in terms of decreasing their pain medications and having improved sleep. If you know someone who suffers from fibromyalgia or if you know a rheumatologist who might like to know about my services, please let them know about me!