

## **Diagnosis of Fibromyalgia for GPs**

Fibromyalgia causes widespread pain and tenderness. The pain and tenderness tend to come and go, and move about the body.

It is usually associated with poor sleep and is strongly associated with migraine and irritable bowel syndrome.

### **Minimum diagnostic Workup**

- History: Widespread pain for at least three months. Determine whether diagnostic criteria are fulfilled, see table\* below. Exclude other treatable conditions that may present with widespread pain.
- General physical examination including neurological, musculoskeletal to exclude signs of synovitis, mental state assessment. No need to confirm tender points.
- FBC, U&Es, LFTs, CRP, viscosity, TFTs, CK.
- Confirm diagnosis.
- Provide Fibromyalgia Pathway Leaflet so the patient can opt-in to the Fibromyalgia Pathway.

Fibromyalgia criteria—2016 revision

#### **Criteria**

A patient satisfies modified 2016 fibromyalgia criteria if the following 3 conditions are met:

- (1) Widespread pain index (WPI)  $\geq 7$  and symptom severity scale (SSS) score  $\geq 5$  OR WPI of 4–6 and SSS score  $\geq 9$ .
- (2) Generalized pain, defined as pain in at least 4 of 5 regions, must be present. Jaw, chest, and abdominal pain are not included in generalized pain definition.
- (3) Symptoms have been generally present for at least 3 months.
- (4) A diagnosis of fibromyalgia is valid irrespective of other diagnoses. A diagnosis of fibromyalgia does not exclude the presence of other clinically important illnesses.

#### **Ascertainment**

(1) WPI: note the number of areas in which the patient has had pain over the last week. In how many areas has the patient had pain? Score will be between 0 and 19

Left upper region (Region 1)

Jaw, left<sup>a</sup>

Shoulder girdle, left

Upper arm, left

Lower arm, left

Right upper region (Region 2)

Jaw, right<sup>a</sup>

Shoulder girdle, right

Upper arm, right

Lower arm, right

Axial region (Region 5)

Neck

Upper back

Lower back

Chest<sup>a</sup>

Abdomen<sup>a</sup>

Left lower region (region 3)

Hip (buttock, trochanter), left

Upper leg, left

Lower leg, left

Right lower region (Region 4)

Hip (buttock, trochanter), right

Upper leg, right

Lower leg, right

#### **(2) Symptom severity scale (SSS) score**

Fatigue

Waking unrefreshed

Cognitive symptoms

For the each of the 3 symptoms above, indicate the level of severity over the past week using the following scale:

0 = No problem

1 = Slight or mild problems, generally mild or intermittent

2 = Moderate, considerable problems, often present and/or at a moderate level

3 = Severe: pervasive, continuous, life-disturbing problems

**The symptom severity scale (SSS) score:** is the sum of the severity scores of the 3 symptoms (fatigue, waking unrefreshed, and cognitive symptoms) (0–9) plus the sum (0–3) of the number of the following symptoms the patient has been bothered by that occurred during the previous 6 months:

(1) Headaches (0–1)

(2) Pain or cramps in lower abdomen (0–1)

(3) And depression (0–1)

The final symptom severity score is between 0 and 12

**The fibromyalgia severity (FS) scale** is the sum of the WPI and SSS

**A diagnosis of Fibromyalgia does not mean it is the patient's only diagnosis or even the most important diagnosis. New symptoms and signs should be investigated as appropriate.**

\* F. Wolfe et al 2016 Revisions to the 2010/2011 fibromyalgia diagnostic criteria. *Seminars in Arthritis and Rheumatism* 46(2016)319-329