

To The Newly Diagnosed Patient

Fibromyalgia can be a confusing diagnosis both to the patient and to the treating physician. One of the principal missions of the National Fibromyalgia Partnership is to educate both patients and physicians about what is currently known about this disease. Hopefully, through education, patients will be diagnosed more quickly and be started on a therapeutic treatment program at an earlier stage in their disease.

It is my observation that early and aggressive treatment can produce the best results. Patients diagnosed early (especially in the first one to six months of symptom onset) have often responded with partial or complete remissions with the proper medication and an exercise program. It is important to recognize that early diagnosed patients with no concurrent medical illness will generally do better than patients with concurrent medical illnesses.

Patients need to know that medication, judicious rest, exercise, physical therapy, and good diets can do more than just control the symptoms of fibromyalgia; they can control the disease process as well. There is no cure for fibromyalgia, but people do get better! Hopefully, as better medications that are more specific for fibromyalgia are developed, and people are diagnosed earlier in their illness, more patients with fibromyalgia will go into remission, or at least partial remission, and feel better.

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