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About Fibromyalgia

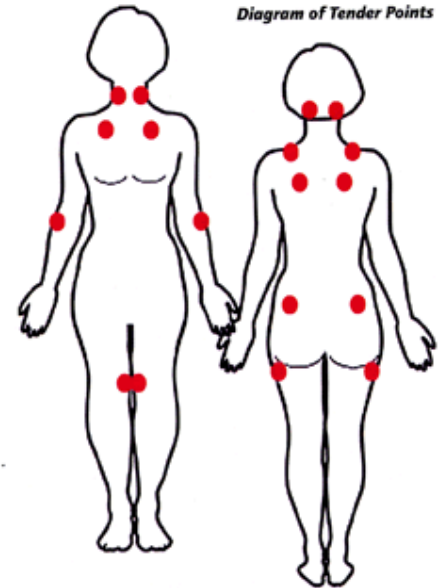
[Home](#) > [Fibromyalgia](#) > [Diagnosis](#)

- [Symptoms](#)
- [Diagnosis](#)
- [Treatment](#)
- [Prevalence](#)
- [Causes](#)
- [Prognosis](#)
- [Science of FM](#)
- [Newly Diagnosed Patients](#)
- [FM Fact Sheet](#)
- [Economic Burden](#)
- [Research Abstract](#)
- [Clinical Trials](#)

Diagnosis

Currently there are no laboratory tests available for diagnosing fibromyalgia. Doctors must rely on patient histories, self-reported symptoms, a physical examination and an accurate manual tender point examination. This exam is based on the standardized American College of Rheumatology (ACR) criteria. Proper implementation of the exam determines the presence of multiple tender points at characteristic locations.

It is estimated that it takes an average of five years for an FM patient to get an accurate diagnosis. Many doctors are still not adequately informed or educated about FM. Laboratory tests often prove negative and many FM symptoms overlap with those of other conditions, thus leading to extensive investigative costs and frustration for both the doctor and patient. Another essential point that must be considered is that the presence of other diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus, does not rule out an FM diagnosis. Fibromyalgia is not a diagnosis of exclusion and must be diagnosed by its own characteristic features.



To receive a diagnosis of FM, the patient must meet the following diagnostic criteria:

- Widespread pain in all four quadrants of the body for a minimum duration of three months
- Tenderness or pain in at least 11 of the 18 specified tender points when pressure is applied

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- [Spanish](#)
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- [Jewelry](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Awareness Items](#)
- [Goodies](#)
- [Apparel](#)

- FIBROMYALGIA**
- [What is Fibromyalgia?](#)
- [Who is Affected?](#)
- [What are the Symptoms?](#)
- [How is Fibromyalgia Diagnosed?](#)
- [What Causes Fibromyalgia?](#)
- [Science of Fibromyalgia](#)
- [How is Fibromyalgia Treated?](#)
- [What is the Prognosis?](#)
- [An Overview for the Newly Diagnosed Patient](#)
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- [Abstracts](#)
- [Clinical Trials](#)
- [Research Overview](#)

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