

Update on Fibromyalgia

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Fibromyalgia (FM) is a multisymptomatic chronic pain syndrome that can best be understood as a systemic disease. The multitude of symptoms such as generalized pain, tenderness, fatigue, disturbed sleep, irritable bowel and bladder and frequently also anxiety and depression pose high demands on the diagnostic work-up of the patients. The lecture will focus on how to investigate and diagnose FM patients with special reference on strategies to communicate the disease to the patient. An orientation of the pathophysiological mechanisms of FM will be given as a basis for rational strategies of a step-up treatment care model. The possible treatments that can be offered at a primary care setting by an individual care giver as well as algorithms to be used at specialized pain clinics applying multimodal, team-based treatments will be discussed. The importance of practical skills such as how to inform the patient, how to motivate patients to accept physical activity/exercise as a treatment modality and how to try to make adequate yet realistic life style changes will be discussed. The importance of good coping skills and sleeping habits will be reviewed. Finally, a brief orientation regarding drug therapy for FM will be provided.