



## What is Fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia is a debilitating condition that can negatively affect many aspects of a person's life. The primary symptoms of fibromyalgia are musculoskeletal pain, severe fatigue, and disturbed sleep. Patients with fibromyalgia commonly say that they ache all over. Their muscles often feel as though they've been overworked or injured. More women than men have fibromyalgia, but it occurs in both women and men of all ages. It is estimated that its prevalence may be as high as 3-5% of the general population.

## Can Physical Therapy Help My Patients With Fibromyalgia?

Absolutely! People with fibromyalgia typically have musculoskeletal and soft tissue dysfunction that significantly contributes to their pain, fatigue, and sleep disturbance. Specifically, most patients with fibromyalgia have myofascial trigger points in muscles throughout their body. As described by Travell and Simons, myofascial trigger points cause point tenderness in muscles, referred pain, poor motor control and muscle endurance, connective tissue restrictions superficial to the trigger point, and sleep disturbance. The connective tissue dysfunction causes tissue hypersensitivity and visceral irritability via the visceral-cutaneous reflex. The physical therapists at the Pelvic Health and Rehabilitation Center are specifically trained in myofascial

trigger point release and connective tissue manipulation. Our treatment programs successfully minimize the symptoms of fibromyalgia by eliminating myofascial trigger points, normalizing connective tissue mobility, and prescribing an individualized home exercise program.

*Don't forget about the International Pelvic Pain Society Annual Meeting in San Diego October 25-27th! [www.pelvicpain.org](http://www.pelvicpain.org)*

## The New Addition to the Pelvic Health and Rehab Center

In July, Elizabeth M. McBride joined our team at the Pelvic Health and Rehabilitation Center. Elizabeth completed her Master of Science degree in Physical Therapy in 2005 at the Texas Woman's University School of Physical Therapy. Formerly, Elizabeth was on staff at the UCSF Medical Center where she specialized in cardio-pulmonary rehabilitation. Her strong interest in Pelvic Floor Dysfunction resulted in a career change as she became more involved in the field. Elizabeth has contributed to the treatment plans of our patients and participated in lecture preparation for our upcoming conferences. She is an invaluable asset to our Center and will help us provide the highest quality of care to our patients.