

The Atlas of Life

**CAUSE & EFFECT:  
If Fibromyalgia is the Effect,  
What is the Cause???**



**Dr. Brandon Harshe**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Fibromyalgia and Chronic Pain**

By Dr. Shawn Dill

We've all had days when our muscles feel sore, and all we'd like to do is spend the day sleeping off the fatigue. Days like these may be caused by rigorous physical exertion the day before or even a restless and uneasy night of sleep. But if you wake up every morning with a stiffness or soft tissue pain that causes ongoing weakness or fatigue, you may be suffering from fibromyalgia or chronic pain.

Many people who have fibromyalgia don't know how to put their symptoms into words, simply because they've been dealing with them for so long. Chronic pain (meaning it lasts for more than three months) may change from day to day and may be described as aching, shooting, radiating or tender. It may move around or it may feel like it's everywhere at once. The pain may be above the waist, below the waist, on the right or left side of the body and just about everywhere in between. Other symptoms include morning stiffness, headaches and sensitivity to sounds, temperature changes and lights.

Though fibromyalgia is sometimes referred to as an arthritis-related condition, it does not cause joint damage or inflammation or damage to muscle and other tissues. However, it can be debilitating because the pain and fatigue associated with the condition can make it difficult for people to go about their daily lives.

If you suffer from fibromyalgia, it important to realize that you are not alone. Around 5 million Americans have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia, and if you are one of them (or think you may be one of them), know that you can do something about it.

Unlike other health conditions, there are no medical tests to diagnose the pain, and some people are told by doctors that their pain isn't real and therefore no treatment options exist. But you know your own body, and if you believe you may be suffering from chronic pain, make your voice heard.

Because there is no way to really diagnose the condition, some medical practitioners believe that fibromyalgia should be treated by several health care practitioners simultaneously. Though the form of care is customized on a case-by-case basis, it usually involves some or all of the following: an active exercise program, acupuncture, psychotherapy, behavior modification therapy, massage, physical therapy, low doses of medication and chiropractic care. There is no cure per sé, but a regimen of standard health care with a heavy dose of holistic care that addresses full body wellbeing has been shown to significantly reduce the debilitating effects of fibromyalgia symptoms.

What is most important is that you realize that you are in control of your health. You deserve to live a life free from chronic fatigue, and it is possible to do that.

## REFERENCES

- Nordqvist, Christian. What is Fibromyalgia? What Causes Fibromyalgia? MedicalNewsToday.com. (April 22, 2009) Retrieved December 10, 2010 from <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/147083.php>.
- FibroCenter.com Retrieved December 10, 2010 from <http://www.fibrocenter.com/index.aspx>.

## CHAPTER 1

### **Why Xyrem aka The “Date Rape” Drug is NOT a Proper Solution For Fibromyalgia**

I would find it almost humorous the ridiculous lengths drug companies will go to make money, if their tactics weren't so devious. The drug Xyrem, and its newest potential use, is no exception.

Xyrem is actually gamma hydroxy butyrate acid, or GHB, which is sometimes referred to as sodium oxybate in medical circles. GHB is also known as the “date-rape” drug.

Here is what the Institute For Substance Abuse Treatment Evaluation has to say about GHB:

#### ***What is GHB?***

*GHB (gamma hydroxy butyrate acid) is a fast-acting central nervous system depressant. Though obtainable in powder and capsule form, GHB is usually available as an odorless, colorless, and nearly tasteless liquid.*

#### ***How does GHB work?***

*The effects of GHB are usually felt 10 to 60 minutes after ingestion. The primary effects last about 2 to 3 hours, but the residual effects of GHB can last up to a whole day. At small doses, GHB encourages a reduction of social inhibitions, an intensification of feelings of intoxication (similar to the effects of alcohol), and an increased libido. At higher doses, this euphoria gives way to sedation.*

#### ***What are the side effects of GHB use?***

*GHB slows breathing and heart rate. Combining GHB with alcohol exacerbates these effects, and the result can be deadly. Side effects may include vomiting, drowsiness, dizziness, vertigo and seizures. At high doses, GHB can also cause muscle spasms and unconsciousness.*

#### ***What are some common street names for GHB?***

*Common street names for GHB include battery acid, Grievous Bodily Harm, Georgia Home Boy, liquid X, or liquid G.*

Xyrem was originally meant to aid in narcolepsy treatments, but a recent study shows it could also be used and approved for off-label uses such as **Fibromyalgia**.

Xyrem is the only drug that is on two drug schedules at once. It is a schedule I drug, meaning it is highly addictive and dangerous when not used for medical purposes. It is also a schedule III drug, meaning it is safe when used for medical purposes. Jazz Pharmaceuticals doesn't allow pharmacists access to the drug, claiming they can have tighter controls on it by eliminating the middle man.

Here's where the potential for problem begins. Xyrem is expensive. It might cost anywhere from \$500 to \$1700 a month to refill your monthly prescription. Just one year ago, Xyrem cost \$2,000 for one prescription (Maybe that's why there's no middle man?). Considering it is a schedule I drug, what if Fibromyalgia sufferers catch on and start using the street version of GHB aka the “date-rape” drug for a

much cheaper price?

Sure, that's illegal, and MDs and Jazz Pharmaceuticals might scoff at that scenario, bragging that the controls they have on prescriptions are solid (no middle man, remember?). But they are patenting and marketing an ILLEGAL drug under a legal guise. We already have legal heroine in the form of morphine, as well as medical marijuana. What's next? Patented crack cocaine? Prescription LSD? Ecstasy for paresthesia sufferers?

Maybe you are reading this and thinking I'm jumping to conclusions. But let me point out that Jazz Pharmaceuticals, the maker of Xyrem, pleaded guilty in 2007 to charges of marketing Xyrem for unapproved purposes, such as fatigue, pain, and psychiatric disorders. Here is a summary of what they did:

- Sponsored events where speakers bombarded the doctors with the message that Xyrem should be used to treat a variety of medical conditions;
- Paid unrestricted grants to physicians as a reward or inducement to prescribe Xyrem for off-label purposes;
- Targeted physicians who were already prescribing Xyrem for aggressive sales calls to encourage off-label prescriptions;
- Paid speaker fees to doctors who promoted the use of Xyrem for off-label purposes, such as insomnia and psychiatric disorders. For example, one physician had made well over \$100,000 in just one year for giving such speeches. The doctor, Peter Gleason, admitted to giving speeches and seminars without following "evidence-based guidelines". It was said that he once claimed "table salt is more dangerous" than Xyrem.

This is one reason why it is so important to teach your kids not to take drugs, legal or illegal, beginning at an early age. If you don't, they might grow up thinking it's okay to sprinkle Xyrem on their food when they grow up.

Upper Cervical Chiropractic care is a safer alternative, plain and simple.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **How Fibromyalgia Can Lead to Cervical Spinal Stenosis**

Time and again, Chiropractic has been shown to help with fibromyalgia. Simply google “fibromyalgia and chiropractic care” and you’ll see for yourself. It is not a specific cure or treatment of fibromyalgia, or any condition for that matter, but removing the interference to the nervous system can result in a number of positive changes.

One thought as to why fibromyalgia patients suffer so much is that they often suffer from another condition known as cervical spinal stenosis, a degenerative condition in which the spinal canal narrows and presses on the spinal cord and meninges. This kind of pressure will undoubtedly block normal transmission of messages between the nervous system and the body, and vice versa.

When someone has an upper cervical subluxation for a long period of time and doesn’t ever get that problem corrected, the compensatory changes occurring in the spine will speed up the degeneration process. This will lead to bone spurs, narrowed discs, fused vertebrae, or in the case of fibromyalgia, spinal stenosis and pain.

Often the treatment for spinal stenosis is a very invasive surgery known as a laminectomy, which is removal of the lamina of the vertebra in order to relieve the pressure on the spinal cord. This is the typical allopathic answer to a problem: cover it up or cut it out.

Instead of covering it up with a drug like Xyrem, or cutting it out via a laminectomy, why not naturally restore the spine’s natural juxtaposition? Non-invasive, precise Chiropractic care just makes so much more sense.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Fibromyalgia = An Effect, Vertebral Subluxation = A Cause**

“Muscle fiber pain,” as translated into English from the Latin word fibromyalgia, is a common diagnosis today in our society. Often, people diagnosed as fibromyalgia sufferers experience the effects of chronic fatigue as well. These two conditions tend to create a vicious cycle whereas fibromyalgia could lead to chronic fatigue which can lead to fibromyalgia, etc. Similar to what comes first... the chicken or the egg?

But neither condition comes first. What comes first in the process of fibromyalgia is the vertebral subluxation.

#### **The Cause**

The vertebral subluxation, or subluxation for short, is a shift in one of one of the vertebrae that consists of four components: misalignment, narrowing of spinal canal, pressure or tension on the spinal cord and/or brain stem area, and interference to the transmission of mental impulses from the nervous system to the body.

Because of these four components, the subluxation will be most damaging in the upper cervical spine, at Atlas (C1) or Axis (C2), where all four of these components can exist at once. Because of the characteristics of the subluxation, it can pose serious implications for one's health if left unattended for a long period of time. And considering the birth process itself is a traumatic event for a newborn baby, a subluxation from birth left alone for a lifetime will only decrease the quality of life.

The subluxation will impose a blockage to the essential communication needed between the brain and the body. With this communication interrupted by a subluxation, health problems like high blood pressure, decreased organ function, and pain syndromes such as fibromyalgia might arise.

The goal of Chiropractic is to ensure the nervous system is functioning as it should, properly communicating to the body and vice versa. A careful Chiropractic analysis and specific adjustment to the upper cervical spine will enable the spine to exist subluxation-free, thereby allowing one's body to function without interference to the nervous system.

Stop sitting around without hope and the curse of a fibromyalgia diagnosis. You are not your disease... there IS hope. Upper Cervical Chiropractic care could be that hope.