

Hypnosis and Fibromyalgia



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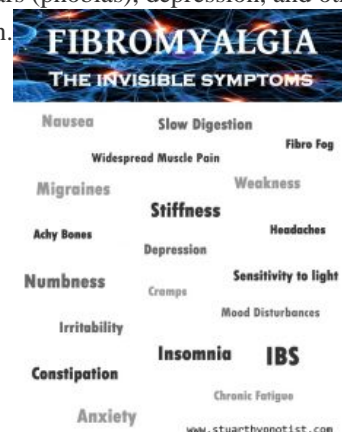


Before I talk about how hypnosis how can be used in fibromyalgia treatment, I think it is imperative to shed more light of understanding on what hypnosis and hypnotherapy and how effective they work in fibromyalgia treatment.

Hypnosis is a non-invasive technique that encourages you to achieve heightened levels of focus and sensation. People who practice hypnosis believe that there are two main components to the mind: the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. Through relaxation and suggestion, you are able to access your subconscious mind and stop behaviors or thoughts that may be contributing to pain or other unpleasant symptoms.

Hypnosis literally refers to the peculiar condition of the nervous system where a person gets deep sleep, or gets unconscious for a certain period of time. In other words, hypnosis is a deep sleep, a mental state where a person, who is undergoing a hypnosis session, leaves his present level or state of mind in order to reach nervous sleep (deep mental stage).

There are various ways in which a person undergoes sessions of hypnosis or hypnotism. It has been proved, scientifically that it helps in gaining one's confidence and helps in gaining self-assurance by overcoming certain fears (phobias), depression, and other related issues. Hypnosis helps in maintaining one's mental levels which can help in the long run.



Contrary to popular belief, though, people who are in a state of hypnosis are not unaware of their actions and will not do anything that they have a serious moral or ethical objection to. In fact, you do have control over your actions as well as what you say while you are hypnotized. Moreover, you have the ability to remember what transpired while you were hypnotized. However, in some cases, your subconscious mind may choose to "forget" just what happened.

Researchers are not completely sure how hypnosis therapy works or why it works so well in fibromyalgia patients. A recent study performed at the University of Iowa looked to explain what actually happens to the brain during hypnosis. Brain scans were taken of chronic pain sufferers in hypnotic trances and analyzed for activity changes. Researchers found that people under hypnosis had reduced activity in pain network areas of the brain. In particular, the area of the brain responsible for "feeling" pain had significantly reduced activity levels. This suggests that hypnosis treatment works because it actually has a physical effect on the brain.



Fibromyalgia typically afflicts people with two main types of pain:

- Hyperalgesia ? this is where you're super-sensitive to pain and have an acute response to the sensation.
- Allodynia is where things cause you pain which wouldn't cause pain in another person. Somebody brushing your arm, for example, could cause pain. A little stub of the toe could inflict crippling pain on a fibromyalgia sufferer, pain which would last for far longer than in another person.

Many fibromyalgia sufferers attribute reduction in their symptoms to the power of hypnosis. Fibromyalgia sufferers often use hypnosis as a way to limit their pain symptoms and increase their energy and comfort level. A study conducted by the NIH showed that fibromyalgia sufferers undergoing hypnosis reported 80% fewer pain symptoms than those who received no hypnosis treatment. Other benefits of hypnosis include:

- decreased muscle pain
- decreased morning fatigue
- fewer sleep difficulties
- increased relaxation

Hypnosis, along with guided imagery, is sometimes used to help people with fibromyalgia. The idea is to induce a deeply relaxed state, one that lets you suspend your critical ways of thinking and leaves you open to suggestion. The hypnotherapist may suggest that you practice turning down your pain, like the volume on a radio. That may help some people with the chronic, intense pain of fibromyalgia.

Hypnosis is an alternative therapy that may be used to help treat fibromyalgia symptoms. A hypnotic procedure uses a state of deep relaxation to promote changes in experiences, perceptions, sensations, or emotions, although researchers are still not sure how hypnosis works. Some people with fibromyalgia find alternative therapies effective for fibromyalgia pain or other symptom relief.

Talk with your doctor about the benefits of various alternative therapies for fibromyalgia.

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