

# "Fibromyalgia - painful muscles"

Since I attended the International Polio Conference in Miami USA last year, we have been exchanging newsletters with some other polio groups in other parts of the world.

In April 2008 I dashed off an answer to the Boca Area Post Polio Group in Florida USA, in response to a query in their newsletter about Fibromyalgia.

We have also had a few enquiries here in WA about Fibromyalgia lately and Debbie, reading their June newsletter, said "Here's a good article on Fibromyalgia we could use!" then looking at the author at the bottom of the page, laughed and said "Oh, you wrote it!" So now that it has been around the globe, we thought perhaps we better put it in our own newsletter for WA polio members.

**Tessa Jupp RN**

**Dorothy's Question:** I'm wondering if any other polio people have both PPS and Fibromyalgia?

**Tessa's answer:** Post polio literature has for many years, mentioned polio survivors experiencing fibromyalgia. In Western Australia we have been successfully treating this with large doses of supplemental magnesium chelate. Whereas polio people with just "muscle aches" and "cramps" may only need smaller doses twice a day of magnesium, those whose symptoms are bad enough or have been told by doctors that they have "Fibromyalgia" seem to need greater doses and maybe more frequently during the day ie before each meal and before bed as well (and even during the night if they wake up with muscle pain or cramps).

We find that the best way to work out your dose is to take 500mg (ie 100mg of elemental magnesium) chelated seems to work best, at least twice a day and increase the dose by 500mg (at one dose or two doses if severe problems) every 2 - 3 days until you reach the point that your bowels are tending towards diarrhoea. When this happens reduce the dose by the last increase so that you are just below the dose that gives diarrhoea. This should alleviate most muscle pain. Sometimes if the muscles are really tight, some extra massage to help to loosen them may also be necessary but after that, continued magnesium supplementation should keep them relaxed so that massage is no longer necessary.

Magnesium usually only lasts about 12 hours at the most so this is why it needs to be taken morning and night. It is better absorbed on an empty stomach and usually effective within a few minutes of taking it if experiencing cramps, headaches, backaches, hiccups, twitching, spasm. (If not resolving within 5 - 10 minutes, then you need to take a bit more.)

We have found that magnesium tablets generally are not well absorbed. Magnesium capsules provide better absorption and magnesium powder is the best absorbed. (our WA powder is cheaper than shop-bought)

People with fibromyalgia may have to take large doses for a few years but people have reported back, that over time they have been able to reduce the dose to a more normal dose that other polios find effective. Taking Vitamin C at the same time may help to reduce the inflammation in the muscles and

raise the pain threshold. Vitamin C needs to be taken as frequently and at the same time as the magnesium. Work out the dose of Vitamin C the same way as for the magnesium. Again too much Vitamin C at a time will give diarrhoea.

Magnesium needs acid to help with absorption so people on antacids may have problems absorbing oral supplements. Take lemon juice or apple cider with your dose (Vitamin C helps too) to aid absorption. NB Coca Cola will also help if the others are not available.

It is important to raise magnesium levels if they are low as you are more likely to have a heart attack if magnesium or potassium levels are too low. If low magnesium becomes a long-term problem due to antacids, it may even become necessary for your doctor to give you magnesium intravenously.



**"Let me put it this way . . .  
If you were a building you'd  
be condemned."**

Manganese works on tendons and if you are having severe muscle problems then the tendons are being affected too. Manganese stops the stiffness we get after sitting for a while, lessens tinnitus, twinges across joints, torn tendons and muscles, tight tendons and aches, clumsiness, loss of balance and a tendency to bump into furniture and doorways. Manganese can be taken once a day. Usual dose required varies from 200mg - 1200mg manganese. (6 tablets) Occasionally too much may give diarrhoea. Start with one 200mg (20mg elemental) tablet, increase every 3 days until stiffness or pain going or up to 6 tablets a day (you may want to divide the dose if you are needing to take 6 tablets).