

2011 Modification of the American College of Rheumatology Diagnostic Criteria for Fibromyalgia

Figure. Example of a Patient Self-report Survey for the Assessment of Fibromyalgia Based on Criteria in the 2011 Modification of the ACR Preliminary Diagnostic Criteria for Fibromyalgia⁷

Widespread Pain Index (1 point per check box; score range: 0-19 points)

① Please indicate if you have had pain or tenderness during the past 7 days in the areas shown below. Check the boxes in the diagram for each area in which you have had pain or tenderness.

Symptom Severity (score range: 0-12 points)

② For each symptom listed below, use the following scale to indicate the severity of the symptom during the past 7 days.

- No problem
- Slight or mild problem: generally mild or intermittent
- Moderate problem: considerable problems; often present and/or at a moderate level
- Severe problem: continuous, life-disturbing problems

	No problem	Slight or mild problem	Moderate problem	Severe problem
Points	0	1	2	3
A. Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Trouble thinking or remembering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Waking up tired (unrefreshed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

③ During the past 6 months have you had any of the following symptoms?

	0	1
A. Pain or cramps in lower abdomen	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
B. Depression	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
C. Headache	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

Additional criteria (no score)

④ Have the symptoms in questions 2 and 3 and widespread pain been present at a similar level for at least 3 months?

No Yes

⑤ Do you have a disorder that would otherwise explain the pain?

No Yes

ACR indicates American College of Rheumatology. Scoring information is shown in blue. The possible score ranges from 0 to 31 points; a score ≥ 13 points is consistent with a diagnosis of fibromyalgia. Additional scoring information and a

printer-ready version of this survey that patients can complete are available online (eFigure 1 and eFigure 2 in the Supplement).

According to the ACR criteria and questionnaire above, a total score of 12 or less is not consistent with a diagnosis of FMS, while a total score of 13 or greater is. However, as with most of these types of questionnaire-based diagnostic criteria it is more complicated than this. One caveat is that box 4 must be answered “yes” and box 5 must be answered “no”. However, it really requires the comprehensive examination and work-up of a physician competent in FMS to confirm that you do not have some other medical condition that could be causing your symptoms. For now, just answer this question to best of your ability based on what you know about your health history at this time. You will learn more how you can work with your health care provider to definitively rule out other medical conditions in chapter seven.

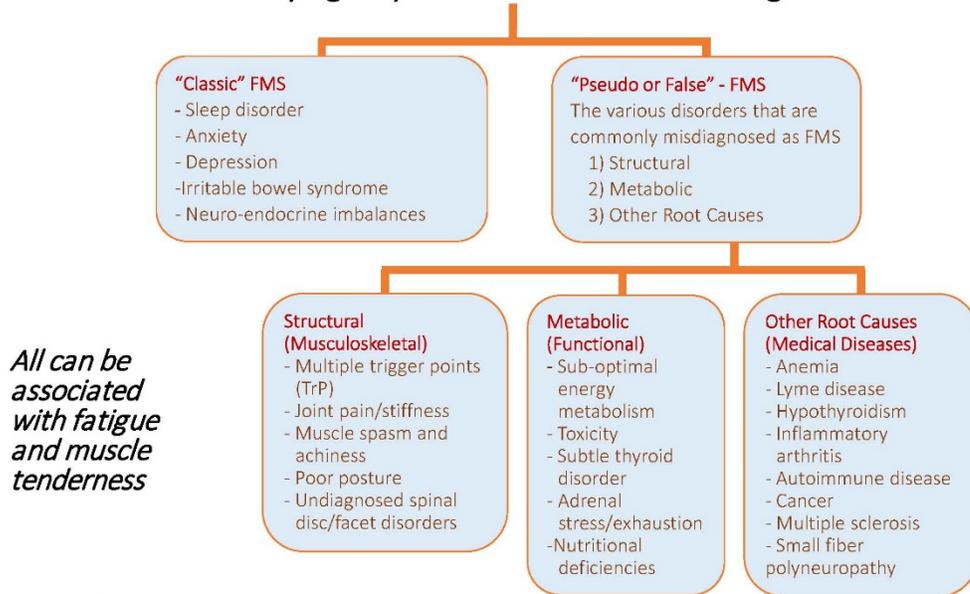
Even if you score 13 or greater on the above questionnaire it does not mean you absolutely have classic FMS, but it is a start in determining this. We also know if your score is 12 or less that having classic FMS is highly unlikely. Other strong evidence of support for the diagnosis of classic FMS would be the presence of the following most commonly associated symptoms in addition to pain all over and fatigue;

1. Anxiety
2. Depression
3. Non-refreshing sleep
4. Irritable bowel syndrome (constipation and/or diarrhea, cramping, bloating and distention)

The absence of at least two of the above symptoms, even in the presence of body achiness and fatigue, suggests that the real issues are not centrally-mediated by the nervous system and that the source of your problems is no classic FMS. If you did score 13 or more on the main questionnaire, answered “yes” to box 4 and “no” to box 5, and have at least two of the symptoms listed above you will need to pay very close attention to the information and instructions in chapter 4, which is dedicated to making you understand classic fibromyalgia and what your best options are on successfully managing it.

If you do not meet the criteria for likely having classic fibromyalgia, but you do have long-standing pain and fatigue, you will need to continue to read and explore the other possibilities which we present as the most common disorders that can masquerade as FMS. We break them into three categories; 1) Structural (musculoskeletal disorders), 2) Metabolic (functional disorders), and 3) Other Root Causes (medical diseases or pathologies). A chapter will be dedicated to each of these categories and will help you to understand in which category you may fit and what the best options are on successfully managing your specific condition. (See diagram below)

Fibromyalgia Syndrome Clinical Reasoning Guide



From: Schneider M, Brady D, Perle S.
J Manipulative Physiol Ther. 2006;29:493-501.