

Scientific Study

Fibromyalgia: Suddenly You're 80 Years Old!

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Women with fibromyalgia look normal; however, they report a high rate of disability.

Fibromyalgia is a invisible disability in which the disease process is characterized by chronic widespread musculoskeletal pain, non-restorative sleep, fatigue, headache, morning stiffness, poor memory, difficulty concentrating, paresthesias (numbness and tingling) and overall impaired functioning in both social and occupational settings.

Researchers at California State University in Fullerton say women with fibromyalgia are more disabled than they appear.

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More than half of women with fibromyalgia needed help with light housework such as washing dishes, wiping counters, and carrying up to 10 pounds of groceries.

Going up and down a single flight of stairs proves difficult for more than 60% of women with fibromyalgia. The vast majority of fibromyalgia sufferers are no longer able to participate in strenuous household activities and exercise, or lift and carry 25 pounds.

An average woman in her 80's has more functional capacity than much younger women with fibromyalgia. Yet, most women in their 80's cannot care for themselves. In fact, the national average for nursing home residents is only 76 years of age.

These shocking statistics imply that fibromyalgia patients are disabled enough to require assisted living services.

Fibromyalgia is the 2nd most common disorder seen by rheumatologists, affecting roughly 2% of the population of the United States. Middle aged women are afflicted at a higher rate, with a prevalence of 3.4% for women, and 0.5% for men.

References

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