

FIBRO NEWS



North Somerset Fibromyalgia Support Group

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Issue 78

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2008 DIARY DATES

Date	Topic	Speaker
September 24th	Group time	All
October 29th	Herbalist	Sue Hinchley
November 26th	Craft Session	

Meetings are held the last Wednesday of each month

10.30 – 12.30 at the Folk Hall, Portishead

£1.50 per session

Group Charges

Group membership is £10 per annum. Each member receives a monthly newsletter by post. When attending meetings a fee of £1.50 is made to cover refreshments, a raffle and hall hire. Books can be borrowed for a returnable deposit of £1.



To all those who
might have one this
month

August meeting

Our meeting at the end of August was a very relaxed affair. There was no invited guest speaker on whom we would have to try and concentrate, so we all did the speaking to each other. The two coffee breaks seemed close together and dallied comfortably.

Members News

Shirley and Barry were still in the last week of entertaining their two grandchildren AGED 6 ½ AND 8 ½. and Shirley writes that her head and limbs were slowly heading into decline so may have made her notes through rainbow coloured fog. She had to leave the meeting early to shoot off home, pick up Jade and Daniel and head for the airport to meet their dad arriving from Guernsey at 11.55. The plan went well, so here are her notes.

Betty and Norman's new grandson arrived later on the day of our previous meeting. A few nights later Norman and Keith had to make an emergency midnight drive to Cribbs Causeway to find a chemist open and able to supply them with a remedy for colic. It was the newborn that needed this not Norman and co!

Carol was on holiday in Cornwall

Louise had a clinic appointment.

Kathy has returned to teaching on a part time basis so we may not see her as often.

Nicky, is now recovering from major surgery. A get well card was passed around for all to send greetings.

Jeanette Redmond, now living in the eco-friendly green life on the Quantocks has discovered a source of legal cut price stamps which is open to members wishing to take advantage of the scheme. Order them at group meetings, for end of October delivery - for Christmas.

Betty announced that Fibromyalgia is no longer described as a syndrome (which is a collection of symptoms) but is a recognised disorder of pain amplification. Therefore the name is just Fibromyalgia.

She also passed on an interesting comment she had heard, that children suffering with what we have always regarded as "growing pains" may in fact be exhibiting early symptoms of Fibromyalgia. As far as she knew there is no research to confirm this.

Averil,

our ever busy bee brought attention to the excellent value of “cards for all occasions”. The first Christmas cards are on sale at 6 for £2.50. All the money raised this day will be put towards the totals amount raised on Bank Holiday Monday (see later).

She also shared with us her efforts to promote FM awareness week within her church community by acting as “Meeter and Greeter” at the door. She also recruited her daughter Kathryn and daughter-in-law Jess to run in the Bristol half marathon. They have managed to collect a sizable donation for FMAUK and have promoted Nicky’s son, Jordan to be collector-in-chief on Sunday 14th Sept!

There is a form available if you would like to sponsor **Kathryn and Jess** and don’t forget if you are a taxpayer the Fibromyalgia Association can collect an extra 28% Gift Aid from the government on top.

Another fundraising possibility is through Waitrose. Apparently the firm has £1000 per month with which it will support 3 local charities. (eg our own support group).

An application form is being forwarded but anyone who uses Waitrose and lives locally can fill in a form to nominate our support group.



Kathryn Mc Manus

Group activity

Members were asked to give suggestions for future speakers, what they would like from the group, and any comments good or bad. These were taken on board, followed by an open discussion.

On bank holiday Monday at Weston-super-Mare Lions fun day, a few fibro friends had a table top sale with some awareness information. Wendy from Weston had made beautiful jewellery; Jenny Brown made some little boxes which nicely complimented the jewellery, and some other items. Jenny McCouaig exhibited a great talent for selling and this made the stall vibrant. Betty, with some help from Yvonne had her usual plants, Julia was on tea duty with ample supply to maintain our strength, while Buffy and Rowena from Pontypridd spoke to people about fibromyalgia and helped out where necessary.

From the sale etc, a total of £250 was raised, which has been sent to FMA UK to support the publication of the Children’s Booklet.

Thank you to all who wrote to their MEP’s, five out of the seven South West Counties members replied positively about signing the declaration. Two UKIP members declined.

STOP PRESS

Averil and Betty went to Bristol on 14th September to support Kathryn and Jess who successfully

Continuing raising awareness for Fibromyalgia, **BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour** carried out a piece on Fibromyalgia on Monday 8th September as part of **FMA UK's Awareness Week**.

It featured FMA UK Medical Advisory Board member Dr Ernest Choy, a consultant Rheumatologist and Director of Research and Development at King's College Hospital. It also feature Janet Horton FMA UK trustee (you will also know her from the benefits helpline and the forum), and Barbara a sufferer.

If you missed the talk you can still hear it on our website by clicking the link on page 4.

Page 3 we have devoted to how the weather effects people with Fibromyalgia, I have picked out two articles from American websites that make quite interesting reading. I for many years have found changes in atmospheric pressure effects my pain levels particularly with my lower back pain, but looking on the internet I have found many references to research that confirms weather, not just damp and cold but low and changing atmospheric pressure.

Richard.

We have kindly had permission from **Fibromyalgia Network** to print this article from their website.

July 2008 eNews Alert



Summer Weather Adding to Your FM Pain?



Researchers continue to publish findings that validate your Fibromyalgia (FM) symptoms, such as memory, concentration difficulties, and how loss of function is the real reason you might be feeling blue. Summer weather could also be causing fibro flares because the barometric pressure dramatically changes from day to day. This fluctuation in pressure can intensify symptoms, but there are ways to counter the negative impact of weather changes. Of course, if your fibro fog is also in "full bloom," you will certainly want to read our **Latest News** section.

Read about the exciting new research that is being funded by our sister organization, the American Fibromyalgia Syndrome Association (AFSA) ... all made possible by contributions from FM patients and their families. As a bonus, we've included two fibro-friendly recipes that are simple, time-saving, and yet nutritious.

The weather is warm and the skies are mostly sunny, so why are you feeling so lousy? It may be the storms or constant changes in summer weather patterns that are causing your increased symptoms.

Daniel Wallace, M.D., who treats FM patients in the Los Angeles area, noted from his clinical experience that changes in the barometric pressure are more important than whether it is hot, cold, wet, or dry. A study done in Cordoba, Argentina followed patients with various rheumatic diseases that may co-exist with FM (rheumatoid arthritis, RA, and osteoarthritis, OA) as well as a healthy control group. All patients were asked to record their pain on a daily basis over a 12-month period. Researchers followed the temperature, humidity, and atmospheric pressure during this time. Patients with FM reported more pain when experiencing cold temperatures and high atmospheric/barometric pressure. High barometric pressure occurs when the skies are clear and low pressure occurs when storms move in. It is hypothesized that increases in barometric pressure could lead to increased production of pro-inflammatory cytokines, which correlate with the pain intensity experienced by FM patients.

Another study done in Norway, noted that patients who have lived with FM less than 10 years were more weather sensitive than patients who had the illness more than 20 years.

But while patients seem to report more flares in January, watch out for the summer storms because they cause dramatic fluctuations in barometric pressure. The summer and fall seasons are usually full of weather changes that may zap your energy and intensify your pain. If you live in the hot Southwestern United States, try to stay out of cold, air conditioning drafts. Dress in lightweight but layered clothing so that you do not swelter in the outdoor heat or shiver in the grocery store and other chilly environments. If you live near a coastline, get extra rest and take care of yourself during the summer storms.

Your ability to tolerate the heat might also depend on your gender. In general, women prefer warmer climates more so than men because of differences in the way their sympathetic nervous system operates. When subjected to hot environments, this system constricts the peripheral blood flow more in women than in men. The result is a cooler skin temperature for women. Although the sympathetic nervous system is a major player in the body's stress responses, this difference between men and women cannot be explained by psychological stress.

Charles Vierck, Ph.D., and colleagues at the University of Florida, tested the temperature preferences of male and female rats to bypass any psychological factors that may influence temperature sensitivities.* In fact, more than one strain or type of rat was tested, but the results were still the same. Female rats were much more cold-sensitive and preferred warmer temperatures, while male rats showed the opposite preference. These results mimic what has been shown in people and could imply that men might prefer cool wraps to soothe their achy muscles.

* Vierck CJ, *et al.* J Pain 9(8):739-749, August 2008.

This original article first appeared in the Fibromyalgia Network July, 2008 *eNews Alert*, reprinted here with permission. www.fmnetnews.com

This across, is a a quotation from a first nation chief in Canada., that Betty and Norman came across on their recent trip to Canada

A [University of the West of England](#) study on cognitive problems (fibrofog) is requesting participants. It is on line so only suitable for those with computers.

E-mail pascale.harrison@uwe.ac.uk and you will be sent a questionnaire.

Diamond Chief Moon

Wellness means you should be in touch with your physical, social, mental and spiritual sides. Know where you come from and think positive. Make the right choices about what you eat and work out so you feel great. Wellness is also having good and positive relationships. If anything is bothering you, talk to someone about it and pray to help you get through it. Once you get down to it, wellness is positive

thinking and knowledge about what is around you.

Subject: Mensa Test

Exercise of the brain is as important as exercise of the muscles. As we grow older, it's important that we keep mentally alert. The saying: "If you don't use it, you will lose it" also applies to the brain, so...

Below is a very private way to gauge your loss or non-loss of intelligence. So take the following test presented here and determine if you are losing it or still a MENSA candidate.

Ok, relax... clear your mind, and begin.

Q: What do you put in a toaster?

A: The answer is bread. If you said "toast," then give up now and go do something else before you hurt yourself. If you said "bread", go to the next question.

Q: Say "silk" five times. Now, spell "silk." What do cows drink?

A: Cows drink water. If you said "milk", please do not attempt the next question. Your brain is obviously overstressed and may even overheat. It may be that you need to content yourself with reading something more appropriate such as "Children's World." If you said "water", then proceed to the next question.

Q: If a red house is made with red bricks, a blue house is made with blue bricks, a pink house is made with pink bricks, a black house is made with black bricks, what is a greenhouse made with?

A: Greenhouses are made from glass. If you said "green bricks," what the heck are you still doing here reading these questions??? Dang!!... If you said "glass", then go on to the next question.

Q: Twenty years ago, a plane is flying at 20,000 feet over Germany. If you will recall, Germany at the time was politically divided into West Germany and East Germany. Anyway, during the flight, TWO of the the engines fail. The pilot, realizing that the last remaining engine is also failing, decides on a crash landing procedure. Unfortunately, the engine fails before he has time and the plane crashes smack in the middle of "no-man's-land" between East Germany and West Germany. Where would you bury the survivors - East Germany or West Germany or in "no-man's-land?"

A: You don't, of course, bury the survivors. If you said ANYTHING else, you are a real dunce and you must NEVER try to rescue anyone from a plane crash. Your efforts would not be appreciated... If you said, "Don't bury the survivors" then proceed to the next question.

Q: If the hour hand on a clock moves 1/60th of a degree every minute, then how many degrees will the hour hand move in one hour?

A: One degree. If you said "360 degrees" or anything else other than "one degree", you are to be congratulated on getting this far, but you are obviously out of your league. Turn your pencil in and exit the room. Everyone else proceed to the final question.

Q: Without using a calculator - You are driving a bus from London to Milford Haven in Wales. In London, 17 people get on the bus. In Reading, six people get off the bus and nine people get on. In Swindon, two people get off and four get on. In Cardiff, 11 people get off and 16 people get on. In Swansea, three people get off and five people get on. In Carmathen, six people get off and three get on. You then arrive at Milford Haven. What was the name of the bus driver?

A: Oh, for Heaven's sake... It was you!