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FIBROMYALGIA

By Eleanor Barrager, DCCN, FAAIM

Fibromyalgia (FMS) and chronic fatigue (CFS) share a number of common symptoms, and the names are often used interchangeably. Many experts believe that myofascial pain, FMS and CFS are part of the same disease with progressively increasing dysfunction.

The American College of Rheumatology developed a diagnosis and protocol that links many of the symptoms of FMS/CFS to rheumatic type conditions. Typical symptoms include pain in the muscles and joints. Both conditions are also associated with poor sleep and depression. Stress and/or lack of sleep tend to make the condition worse.

The onset of fibromyalgia may often be traced back to an injury or physical/emotional trauma, whereas CFS is often preceded by precipitating event such as an infection or exposure to toxins (1). Plant sterols, especially when combined the right antioxidants, have been shown to alleviate many of the symptoms of these disorders.

Plant sterols

Chronic viral and bacterial infections are a characteristic of these conditions, and are the results of a reduced immune function. Sterol 117 can help to modulate the immune system to reduce viral and bacterial infection and, perhaps more importantly, to control the production of IL-6 (2).

Regulation of the production of IL-6 can reduce the chronic pain associated with FMS.



Antioxidants

Research by Bagis and Tamer at the Mersin Medical School in Turkey (3) has indicated a link between FMS and oxidative stress. In a study involving 85 women, suffering from primary fibromyalgia, malondialdehyde – the toxic metabolite of lipid peroxidation, was used to determine oxidative damage in the body. Tender points were stressed by palpitation. Age, smoking, body mass index and duration of the disease were recorded.

Malondialdehyde levels were significantly higher in the fibromyalgia patients than those in the control group. Age, BMI, smoking and duration of disease did not affect these parameters. It was shown that oxidant/antioxidant balances were changed in fibromyalgia patients. The research showed that free radical levels may be responsible for the development of FMS. This initial research supports the hypothesis of oxidative dysregulation contributing to symptoms of FMS.

Research by Fulle, Mecocci et al. at the University of Perugia in Italy indicated oxidative damage to DNA and lipids in muscle specimens of CFS patients as compared to age-matched controls (4). Interestingly, research by Senthilmohan and Zhang et al. at the University of Canterbury showed DNA damage reduction, as measured by the comet assay when diets were supplemented with Enzogenol and vitamin C (5).

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Sterol 117 contains both a high plant sterol content and Enzogenol, a broad spectrum aqueous pine bark extract (pinus radiata) This antioxidant complex has been extensively researched at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and contains the broadest spectrum of polymeric proanthocyanidins commercially available. The synergistic effect of this combination is enhanced with the addition of Cellasate, a proprietary essential fatty acid complex that is designed to facilitate the absorption and retention of the sterols and antioxidants.

In some patients this combination could play an important role in alleviating the inflammation and oxidative stress associated with fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome. This combination can also play an important role in alleviating other immune system disorders such as seasonal allergies, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, colds and flu. This has been particularly well illustrated by the observations of two patients who have taken Sterol 117 to combat fibromyalgia:

Eleanor Barrager, DCCN, FAAN, Director: GENESIS Center For Integrative Medicine

Eleanor has worked as a research dietician and medical scientist at Melbourne University in Australia, and as a college lecturer in biological sciences. Eleanor is a successful sports nutritional consultant to many elite athletes including Olympic athletes, as well as contributing to and publishing various articles in original research papers in peer reviewed medical journals.

“I am writing to thank you with all my heart for giving my mother your wonderful product (Sterol 117). She followed your suggestion by taking two caps a day for the first week and then continued with one a day. In the short time span of 10 days she has had a wonderful improvement and your supplement is the sole change that she has made in her life. She is so excited that she wants to tell the world and distribute your product to everyone suffering from fibromyalgia”

“My problems began back in 1996...I lived with daily unbearable body pain, severe headaches, insomnia and depression...I was finally diagnosed with fibromyalgia... I spent time in hospital and was prescribed various drugs and antidepressants, and sleeping pills for my inability to sleep. Because of the length of time I had taken many medications I began to realize that I had gained a dependence on them. With great determination and tremendous struggle I was able to finally get off all my medications except for the sleeping pills....I did not know how I was going to do it. That was when I was introduced to Sterol 117, I was able to fall asleep without the use of sleeping pills awaking the next morning feeling rested. It has now been over three months. I sleep well almost every night and am virtually free of pain. I feel relaxed and am able to enjoy my duties from day to day. I would highly recommend Sterol 117 to everyone who is struggling with fibromyalgia, depression and other related illnesses. It has turned my life around.”



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