

# WHAT TO DO WHILE AWAITING DIAGNOSIS FOR FM

Many people make the mistake that before they are diagnosed they continue their activities as before, even though they are tired or exhibiting other symptoms that something is wrong.

The best approach to take is to proceed with caution and take steps necessary to rest whenever the opportunity presents itself. Act as if you have FM and don't overdo it, listen to your body. If you are newly ill, what you do at the beginning of your illness may affect how the illness will progress. You have a better chance of your illness not becoming chronic if precautions are taken at the beginning.

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Become knowledgeable about FM and learn the warning signs;

Listen to what your body is telling you;

Become aware of things that aggravate your symptoms, how long you can do an activity and stop before you reach that point;

Pace your physical and mental activities on the kind of day you're having;

Avoid continuing your activities until you crash;

Be realistic about your expectations on a daily basis;

Avoid going from doctor to doctor unless it is necessary;

Be clear when seeing your doctor about your symptoms;

Be knowledgeable about how to take your medicines properly and know the warning signs of its side effects;

Get to know your pharmacist who is knowledgeable about drugs;

If you have a new symptom, do not presume it is ME/CFS and get it checked out;

No one can avoid stress but try not to worry about things you cannot control. [How others react to your illness is a good example.]

Have regular meals, and preferably smaller meals more often to regulate your glucose levels;

Realize that ME/CFS and its symptoms may vary from day to day and are predictable in its unpredictability;

Find short-cuts to must-do items;

Join a support group; and

Remember that just because you're ill, you are still you.

For more detailed information about FM, please see the Canadian Working Case Clinical

Definition, Diagnostic & Treatment Protocols for FMS, a Consensus Document or the FMS Overview on this website.