

Fibromyalgia

David's Story



What if someday you were to wake up and be unable to get out of bed because you were too fatigued or in so much pain that you would contemplate ending it any way you could? If I told you that you might temporarily forget the name of your wife or your child in a moment's notice? And what if most doctors did not know what you have or how to treat you because nothing shows up in blood tests or x-rays so they may possibly even suggest it was all in your head? What would you do?

My name is David Squires and I have primary fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS). Although I did not suddenly wake up with all of the symptoms, I have been dealing with them for the past 50 years. I hope by sharing my story with you that one more person will understand this very complex syndrome.

My experience with FMS started with neck and shoulder symptoms at age 15. Initially, I was diagnosed with “growing pains” and later with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA). By age 20, the pain spread and involved my low back. By age 30, my whole body was in chronic pain. My joints were unaffected so the diagnosis of JRA was ruled out. At that point,

there was no name for my condition. Without a diagnosis, I went through years of unnecessary treatments, spent thousands of medical dollars, and argued with my insurance companies to cover doctors' bills. I saw between 30-40 doctors and no two agreed on an effective therapy program.

Some of the therapies I tried included nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), pain-killers, hypnosis, TENS, biofeedback, exercise programs, myotherapy, acupuncture, vitamin therapy, yoga, Rolfing, a TMJ mouth brace, body cast for six months, chiropractic adjustments, trigger point injections, epidural nerve blocks, ultrasound, electrical stimulation, physical therapy, and, of course, psychiatric counseling. Diagnostic tests included CAT scans, MRIs, blood tests, and over 100 x-rays. Finally, a doctor at the Lahey Clinic in Boston told me I had fibrositis (an early name for FMS), and advised me to find a job with little stress and no physical requirements. At that time in my job as a tool and die maker, I worked 50-hour weeks, always under a contracting deadline. I was too young to retire so I went back to work. By age 37, with great reluctance, I had to stop a career I had spent 15 years exacting. I was in my prime asking myself what the rest of my life would be like if I had to live with this kind of pain.

My story is not unlike so many others with FMS. I thought I had the perfect life. I married my high school sweetheart, bought a home, started a family, and owned my own tool and die business by age 29. I was a good father, husband and provider. Successful at my job, I pushed myself through years of growing pain. Then in 1984, after six months in a body cast, I could not go on.

Life took a radical change for the worse. I could no longer sit or stand for any prolonged period of time without unremitting pain. Unable to understand my condition, my employer thought I could work if I wanted to. When I could not, he cancelled my insurance. My wife of 17 years was not able to cope with the changes and left me. Within the next 18 months, I lost everything—my family, house, and car. I ended up cashing in my life insurance policy and selling my stocks just to get by. I came very close to ending up alone on the street before turning to local social services. A worker there heard my story and went out of his way to help me obtain Social Security disability. Life began to take

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a turn for the better. In 1985, I remarried and my children came back to live with me. Because of my sensitivity to the cold and damp weather of New England, I moved to Arizona where I live today.

Although I am still in pain every day, I consider myself one of the lucky ones with FMS. Despite all the wrong diagnoses, the inappropriate treatments, and given all the rejection by doctors, family, coworkers, and friends who thought there was “nothing wrong with me” because I looked “fine”, I survived. There are still some who do not and will not ever know what I go through on a daily basis living with fibromyalgia.

Am I telling you my story to gain sympathy for me or others with FMS? No! I want you and everyone to know to what lengths a FMS person goes through to receive relief and a diagnosis for his/her symptoms. We are struck with an invisible syndrome that makes us look like hypochondriacs, malingerers, psychosomatically ill, or asking for a handout. Nothing could be further from the truth! Given the choice, we would rather work than accept disability, be free from the pain, and certainly would choose to keep our lives intact than have them turned upside down with FMS.

In March of 1993, my wife, Margy, and I started a support group for people with FMS. We wanted to educate as many people as we could about fibromyalgia. Our group, along with three others in the Phoenix, Arizona area, grew to over 1,000 members in a little over 18 months. We held our first Arizona FMS symposium in March of 1994. Since the criteria for the diagnosis of fibromyalgia was written by the American College of Rheumatology in 1990, diagnosis numbers are going up. However, research is still in its infancy. The medical profession is still in disagreement as to the cause and treatment of fibromyalgia.

Although most doctors don't agree on treatment, most will agree on one thing: FMS is not life threatening. However, FMS can be “life shattering”. For the person with fibromyalgia, life goes on, but in a much different way.

It was quite by accident that I learned of a natural way to help my pain. In January of 1993, my doctor asked me to try a topical product with capsaicin. I had tried capsaicin in the past and didn't think it worked on pain but he convinced me to try it again. The doctor explained that because it was a topical and a natural ingredient, it took time to work. The cream had to be put on several times a day and over an extended period of time before I would see results. Capsaicin (cap-SAY-shun) is derived from the hot pepper plant and is believed to interfere with the production of substance P, a chemical which transmits pain signals to the brain. Fibromyalgia patients have up to three times more substance P than the normal person. So I faithfully applied the product for four weeks and was ready to give up again when I felt pain relief for the first time — relief without side effects like stomach upsets, toxicity, or addiction.

Although nature takes longer, people who change their lifestyles and diet, including taking vitamins and herbs, do much better than those on medications alone. I was already on a multi-vitamin mineral program. (I thought since I was

in a chronic state and unable to exercise that I could at least keep my body in shape nutritionally.) Knowing that fatigue was a common factor because of un-restorative sleep, I tried valerian, an herb thought to reduce insomnia by improving sleep quality without that next day morning grogginess with good results. In early 1995, a natural supplement with magnesium and malic acid was found to benefit the muscle tissue of those with FMS. I decided to try that, too. Having so many other therapies fail, I welcomed natural remedies that might help my symptoms. I have not been disappointed. When my wife wanted a career change from the medical clinic where she worked—even after everything she had been through with me—she decided to start a mail order company that would help others like me. Through my personal experiences and her medical educational background, Margy is able to relate to those in chronic pain and offer non-drug answers. Thus, To Your Health was born in July of 1994.



What advice do I have for others with FMS?

Do whatever you can to help yourself. Do not get upset with people for what they think, say, or do. It is what you think, what you say, what you do about your FMS that is important. Remember: Never give up! Millions of fibromyalgia sufferers know what you are going through. Do not be silent with your FMS. Write letters to your representatives to let them know how fibromyalgia has affected your life. Try to stay positive and motivated. Join a support group or start your own, which may be the best thing you can do for yourself. It was for me. Finally, I would like to share a quote from Edward Everett Hale that has helped me, one that I read almost every day.

“I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something I can do.”

Edward Everett Hale



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- ◆ *Fibromyalgia: More David's Story, 50 Years with Fibro*
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.....Ten Years Later

I hear from so many people who thank me for writing my story and going public with it, for its painful honesty. I once told Margy that I would not write another chapter in my story until fibromyalgia had a cure. Although that has not happened, many of our readers ask me how (and what) I'm doing now and what has changed since I wrote my story in 1994, a decade ago.

Well, for starters, I still don't run marathons but I have Margy and To Your Health! I don't think it's important what is happening to me personally. TyH is not about me but rather the other 12 million people who have this disorder and countless others who have ME/CFS and chronic pain of any nature. Through TyH, we've helped people regain their health; many return to work and many lives that were interrupted are back on track again.

The fibromyalgia world has changed considerably since TyH began. There were few books written then, the diagnostic criteria of 1990 was in infancy, and most doctors still thought fibromyalgia was a psychological problem. Now FMS books line the shelves at major book stores, doctors are diagnosing FMS in less than 3 years (compared to 10) and FMS is considered a neurological, perhaps genetic, problem. No matter what changes, fibromyalgia is still a pain to those of us who have it. And while there is no cure (yet), there are more answers on how to treat it.

In 1994, supplements were not considered in FMS and ME/CFS therapy among medical doctors either. TyH has managed to convince more than a few people that supplements and education are essential to getting and staying better with FMS or any other chronic pain condition. The more you know, the better choices you'll be able to make concerning your own body, and a healthy body with FMS is still better than an unhealthy one with FMS.

There are those who believe drugs are the only answer to stopping the pain. To them, I say that you will only find what you are looking for. Two of TyH's products were used in a double-blind, placebo-controlled study for FMS and ME/CFS but compared to the research on drugs, nutritional studies are few. TyH's answer is *Get with the Program*, which helps fibromyalgia symptoms from the inside out.

Do you know that many people diagnosed with FMS don't even have it? They have candida or some other "feels like it" disorder that once cleared up, their "FMS" is "cured". I'd like to say that the health profession is so nutritionally informed that the support TyH gives isn't needed anymore. I'd like to say that but I can't. I do believe doctors are listening more, though, and this too is changing.

One thing that FMS hasn't changed is my desire to invent things. I found that challenge in trying to keep up with all the latest developments with FMS (with Margy's help, of course!). I call my biochemist friend and pick his brain, what if...? I ask. (I like to keep my mind busy since I gave up marathons!). I've learned from all of you. I couldn't begin to guess how many people I've talked to in 10 years, but on some days I wished I had a recording of what I said so I could just hit, "Play".

Get with the Program is a result of the many questions from those who were having trouble figuring out where to start with supplements and wanting to get off the drug bandwagon. In a full circle, TyH offers my experiences to help you and then you give back to TyH in the form of your positive letters and stories. Ultimately, this changes all of our lives for the better.

So for all of you who wonder, I'm still here, doing what I can in spite of this condition I have. I also offer another quote for you: *If you want something different, do something different – Get with the Program!* There's still hope. Lives are changing for the better and I like to think that TyH has a part in that positive change. Be well and keep writing!

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Get with the Program™ for Fibromyalgia & ME/CFS



Get with the Program™ helps take the guesswork out of making important nutritional decisions for your supplement needs. Plus, we can store your customized program for easy re-ordering!

STEPS TO TAKE	PRODUCTS
<p>1 Customize Your Program. Getting well is a process. You can restore nutrients over time and improve FMS and ME/CFS symptoms the non-drug way! While replacing low magnesium with Fibro-Care™ is a good start, choose additional nutrients to target individual health needs.</p>	<p>Fibro-Care™ See products in Steps 2-12</p>
<p>2 Evaluate your GI health. Acidophilus ES™ and Olive Leaf Extract or ESE™ provide distinct benefits to balance the 'good' and 'bad' bacteria in the gut for proper assimilation of nutrients from food. Optimize food breakdown with digestive enzymes; ginger root as a tummy tonic.</p>	<p>Acidophilus ES™ Olive Leaf Extract or ESE™ Digesta-Care 8™ Ginger Root</p>
<p>3 Take a multivitamin. Multi-Gold™, our high potency multiple vitamin and mineral complex, contains Bs for energy and pain support, plus patented, organic Albion® chelate and Aquamin® minerals for optimum absorption and tolerability. Consider Fibro-Whey™ for muscle energy and cognitive support.</p>	<p>Multi-Gold™ Fibro-Whey™</p>
<p>4 Take extra magnesium & malic acid. Especially if you have pain and low energy. Fibro-Care™ contains a patented, organic magnesium bisglycinate (chelate), plus co factor nutrients to optimize absorption. Fibro-Care™ is the #1 supplement for FMS, ME/CFS and chronic pain because it works! An Albion Gold Medallion mineral.</p>	<p>Fibro-Care™</p>
<p>5 Maximize energy. CoQ10 is nutrient fuel for mitochondria, your cellular energy makers, and for heart muscle energy too. Fibro-Ubiquinol™ is the more bioavailable CoQ10 form. Alpha Lipoic Acid helps metabolize fats and sugars for energy. Both are antioxidants. Consider B12.</p>	<p>Fibro-Ubiquinol™, CoQ10 Alpha Lipoic Acid B12</p>
<p>6 Get to sleep. NEW Valerian Rest ES™ <i>double strength!</i> Encourages restful sleep and reduces nighttime waking. Try 5-HTP and Melatonin TR to support the sleep-wake cycle (your 'body clock').</p>	<p>Valerian Rest ES™ 5-HTP Melatonin TR</p>
<p>7 Boost serotonin with 5-HTP, the building block for this neurotransmitter. A natural anti-depressive agent that helps with REM & NREM sleep, mood, PMS, and decreases pain.</p>	<p>5-HTP</p>
<p>8 Help for pain. Consider Fibro-D3™ to support neuromuscular function and its role in reducing pain. Pain Control Formula™ (Topical) contains the natural ingredient capsaicin, reported to deplete substance P, a neurotransmitter for pain signals to the brain. Calm down over-excited nervous system activity that exacerbates pain with Fibro-GABA™.</p>	<p>Fibro-D3™ 5000 IU Pain Control Formula™ (topical) Fibro-GABA™</p>
<p>9 Clear brain fog. Support neurons communication with "thought provoking" nutrients like Phosphatidyl Serine or Brain Clear ES™ to help "clear the fog". Another brain helper is Acetyl L-Carnitine.</p>	<p>Phosphatidyl Serine Brain Clear ES™ Acetyl L-Carnitine</p>
<p>10 Add an Omega-3 oil (fish or flax) . The benefits of omega-3 oils for brain cognition, a healthy heart, weight control, and nervous system as well as fighting inflammation are well known.</p>	<p>Omega-3 Oils (Fish & Flax)</p>
<p>11 Consider colostrum. Studies show serum IGF-1 (growth factor) levels are low in FMS and ME/CFS. Colostrum provides important growth factor nutrients and more than 75% of Dr. Pellegrino's patients "report some benefit in their symptoms."</p>	<p>Colostrum</p>
<p>12 Secondary conditions. Arthritis and other chronic pain conditions will benefit from Glucosamine Chondroitin with Hyaluronic Acid, as well as Fibro-Enzymes™. For healthy bones, try Fibro-Care Cal™ with the benefits of Fibro-Care™ plus vitamins K, D3, Boron and FOS. The magnesium and calcium in Fibro-Care Cal™ are 100% organic Albion Gold Medallion patented chelates and non-competing for effective absorption.</p>	<p>Glucosamine Chondroitin w/ Hyaluronic Acid Fibro-Enzymes™ Fibro-Care Cal™</p>

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