



Fibromyalgia ... and Teeth?

by award-winning author / stress-relief expert Susie Mantell

Q: Dear Susie, Have you heard anything about Fibromyalgia affecting the teeth? I have had F.M.S. for years, but lately I've had major problems with my teeth. I had been on several drugs, though my dentist says my Fibro has nothing to do with my teeth and I have a feeling he thinks I'm a little nuts. This is so frustrating. Any ideas?

A: There has long been discussion among the medical community regarding a possible role of metals in some cases of fibromyalgia, including the metals that are used in dental work. Here are some other thoughts to discuss with your health care professionals:

- Bruxism (T. M. J.) is grinding and clenching of the teeth, often in our sleep, and also sometimes associated with Fibromyalgia. That grinding can wear down tooth enamel substantially.
- Sjogrens Syndrome, (<http://www.sjogrens.org>) is an autoimmune disorder, which in some cases can accompany Fibromyalgia, too. Sjogrens is also known as, Dry Eye/Dry Mouth Disease. Because of reduced saliva, some people may have more cavities.
- Many people with Fibromyalgia would do well to limit or avoid intake of sugar, flour, alcohol and caffeine. Curiously, some habitually overuse one or more of those very substances, perhaps in a misguided attempt to self-medicate the discomfort and associated blues they experience. Ironically, these very substances can exacerbate symptoms for some. If so, sugar could also be a culprit.

As you may know, F.M.S. is a widely misunderstood phenomenon. It is important to note that I am not a medical professional, and you would best be served by someone who is, specializing in F.M.S./C.F.I.D.S. I do happen to know a bit about Fibromyalgia, though, and it appears to me to be a syndrome of symptoms that occurs in different people to different degrees -- and for different reasons. Many believe it is an autoimmune response, causing widely varying degrees of myofascial pain in at least 11 of the 18 identified Tender Points. Episodic or constant, there may be, but need not be, a sleep-disorder component, digestive and sinus problems, multiple chemical and environmental sensitivities, thyroid, vulvar pain, IBS, restless legs, memory "fibro-fog," and accompanying Chronic Fatigue in some cases, but not all. F.M.S. and C.F.I.D.S. are often listed among primary symptoms of Gulf War Syndrome. A curious disorder!

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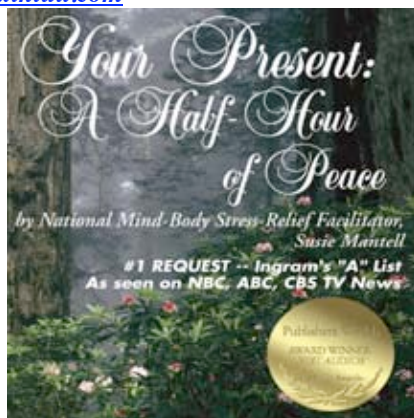
You piqued my curiosity so I did a quick www search for "fibromyalgia" + "teeth." Trying this might lead you some interesting places too. Many sites came up and while some may not be credible resources and I cannot vouch for any specific ones, the fact that 13,500 listings came up tells me there is something there. Most of the articles dealt with the T.M.J. aspect, but since some people find relief from Fibromyalgia symptoms using vitamins, minerals and herbs, one might wonder if some kind of deficiency could cause tarter build-up or something like that. I wish I could be more specific, but I am not a physician and that's really what you need. I will tell you that it is worth exploring with a knowledgeable, licensed medical professional who is also open-minded and well-informed regarding possibilities that may seem a little off-the-beaten-path. Large, metropolitan teaching hospitals with Rheumatology departments researching FMS might be helpful. You might try the following too. I wish you the very best!

<http://www.fmnetnews.com>

<http://www.arthritis.org>

<http://www.intelihealth.com>

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