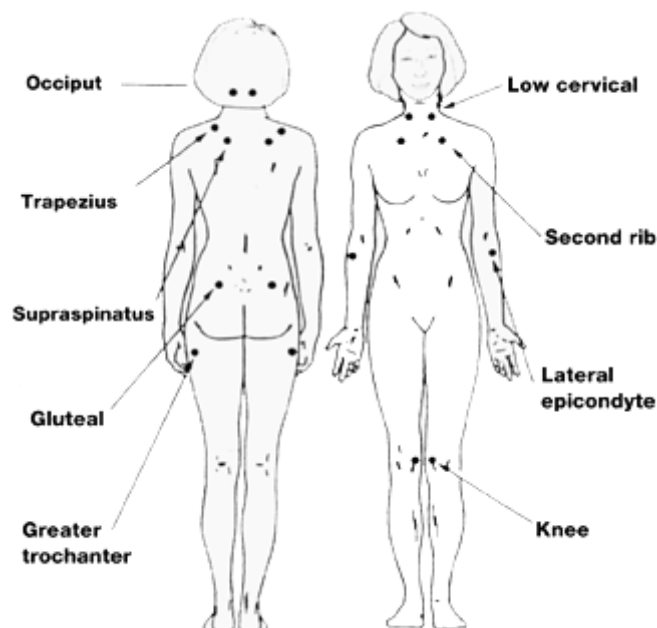


The 18 Tender Points of Fibromyalgia

Your doctor will ask about your pain symptoms and then press on a series of anatomically-defined soft tissue body sites called "tender points." There are 18 tender points on the body that will usually be highly sensitive to pressure in people with fibromyalgia as specified by the American College of Rheumatology criteria. People who do not have fibromyalgia are much less tender to pressure applied at these tender points.

These 18 sites are used for diagnosis cluster around the neck, shoulder, chest, hip, knee and elbow regions. In more in depth studies, over 75 other tender points have been found to exist, but are not used for diagnostic purposes.



While the symptoms associated with Fibromyalgia fluctuate from person to person, there is one common symptom that all agree on - they ache all over. The pain can feel like a deep bone ache, pains and needles, or a stabbing or burning pain. Muscles may feel like they have been pulled or overworked. There are times this pain is mild, others when it is so severe that it becomes unbearable.

Along with pain, many Fibromyalgia sufferers report headaches, poor sleep, fatigue, depression, and irregular bowel habits. Many others simply describe their symptoms as "flu-like."