> *"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."*
>
> **Martin Luther King Jr.**

Just THE FAC'S

WINTER 2023 | Issue 07

FIBROMYALGIA ASSOCIATION CANADA

FAC Recognizes Black History Month

The 2023 theme for Black History Month is: “Ours to tell”.

This theme represents both an opportunity to engage in open dialogue and a commitment to learning more about the stories Black communities in Canada have to tell about their histories, successes, sacrifices and triumphs.

Membership

We will accomplish more together, the larger our membership the greater our power.

If you are not a member of FAC already please join us here https://fibrocanada.ca/application-form/

Black History Month, This Month And Every Month

Research shows that Black women suffer from higher rates of fibromyalgia than White women and research also shows that 27 percent of Black people over the age of 50 suffer from severe pain all of the time. This figure is only 17 percent in White patients.

It might come as no surprise that while this condition impacts the Black community at higher rates, the quality of attention and care they receive is far lower than it is for white patients.

Getting diagnosed and proper treatment with fibromyalgia is difficult if you are White. Being diagnosed and treated as a Black person is even more difficult. This is because of bias in the medical community.

Research actually shows that doctors rate the pain levels of their Black patients lower than those of their White patients.

Education Campaign Networking with Support Groups

FAC will be starting a new Education Campaign called "Networking with Support Groups", in the near future.

The campaign will involve creating a directory of where all the active support groups are located in Canada and work on filling in the gaps.

FAC will also be reaching out to support groups to find out how they can best be supported.

If you are aware of any Support Groups in your area that are not listed on the FAC Resource list at

https://fibrocanada.ca/resources/fm-support-groups-across-canada/

please contact education@fibrocanada.ca

2023 Illumination Campaign

Last year FAC began its first national illumination campaign to spread awareness of fibromyalgia. 100 buildings and landmarks across the country lit up purple on May 12, 2022, in recognition of all Canadians living with fibromyalgia.

This year, we have put forward significantly more illumination requests. Our goal is to increase the number of buildings and landmarks across Canada that will be illuminated purple on Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.

Are you interested in getting involved in this campaign? Do you have any ideas to share that would help increase attention to this lighting event? If yes, we would love to hear from you!

We believe this movement can bring much hope and encouragement to many people living with fibromyalgia. We believe everyone living with this illness wants to make fibromyalgia visible, better understood, and less stigmatized. What gesture are you able to make to raise awareness of fibromyalgia? Even a small contribution can be impactful.

... Continued On Next Page ...

CN Tower, ON

Summerside, PE

Signal Hill, NL

Canada Place Sails of Light, BC

2023 Illumination Campaign

... Continued From Previous Page ...

Consider taking a photo of an illuminated structure, or if you are able, a selfie in front of the building or landmark close to you. Please send in your photo after May 12th to admin@fibrocanada.ca. As the illumination date approaches, you will find a full list of who is lighting for fibromyalgia on our website at https://fibrocanada.ca. Please also stay tuned for our updates on social media.

Thank you for subscribing and being part of this community. Your feedback is much appreciated and always welcomed.

> ***Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.***
> ***Robert Collier (1885-1950)***

Winnipeg, MB

Province House, NS

CN Tower, ON

Grand Prairie Sundial, AB

Beaverlodge, AB
(World's Largest Beaver)

FIBROMYALGIA ASSOCIATION CANADA

FACes of Fibromyalgia Campaign

The "FACes of Fibromyalgia" Campaign is continuing.

Open to anyone with fibromyalgia:

- Take a headshot photo of yourself
- Submit your photo & information via email to admin@fibrocanada.ca
- FAC will add your photo to a photo montage "FACes of Fibromyalgia" on social media & FAC website
- Emailing your photo is considered consent/authorization for use of your image and likeness by Fibromyalgia Association Canada for the "FACes of Fibromyalgia" campaign

Advocacy: Bill C-22

Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC) advocated for the almost 2 million people in Canada with fibromyalgia. FAC reached out to every Member of Parliament (MP) and Senator across Canada to ensure that the voices of the people with fibromyalgia in Canada were heard and represented in Bill C-22. Bill C-22 is an Act to reduce poverty and to support the financial security of persons with disabilities, like fibromyalgia. FAC created and placed an email template on the FAC website so our members could advocate for themselves both to their MP's and their Senators.

Advocacy works because Bill C-22 passed 3rd Reading with 321 MP's voting Yea and 0 MP's voting Nay, on February 2, 2023.

Thank you to everyone who helped with FAC's Bill C-22 email campaign that pushed the MP's to get this bill to third and final reading in the House of Commons. The email campaign must continue until Bill C-22 receives Royal Assent and becomes law. Please reach out to the Senators in your province and keep this Advocacy going.

Together
We Are Stronger

SYMPTOM

People with fibromyalgia can often experience eye symptoms such as foreign body sensation, dry eyes, irritation and visual disturbances such as blurred vision.

People with fibromyalgia can also have, with their dry eye syndrome, a coexisting reduced corneal sensitivity. Reduced corneal sensitivity is associated with greater irritation, greater tear instability, blink rate and ocular (eye) surface disease.

Ocular surface disease indicates damage to the surface layers of the eye, (the cornea and conjunctiva). This can cause symptoms of burning, dryness, grittiness, foreign body sensation, photophobia (sensitivity to light) and blurred or fluctuating vision.

Cases of scleritis have been reported in people with fibromyalgia. The sclera is the white part of the eye. When the sclera is swollen, red, tender or painful and inflamed this condition is called scleritis.

FAC is Hosting Volunteer Town Halls

FAC is hosting its first ever virtual Town Hall meetings to connect with volunteers.

By the time this Newsletter is published, those of you who checked "yes" on your FAC membership application, where it asks if you want to volunteer, should have received an invitation to attend a Volunteer Town Hall. Committee Chairs will be introducing you to each of FAC's Committees. If you checked yes on your FAC Membership application and have not received an email to join us at the Town Hall please contact admin@fibrocanada.ca

For those who checked "unsure" on their FAC membership application will hear from us in the near future for a Town Hall Meeting in March.

Together We Are Stronger

FIBRO FAC's

Start Low and Go Slow

People with fibromyalgia often cannot tolerate recommended doses of their medications, especially in the beginning.

Always start with low doses and go slowly. Increase your dose gradually in order to give your body a chance to adjust to the medication. Start low and go slow.

The International Association for the Study of Pain

The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) has named 2023 the Global Year for Integrative Pain Care. The goal of the Global Year advocacy campaign is to, each year, focus on a special aspect of pain and to increase awareness within the pain community and beyond.

In light of the opioid crisis that has affected people in many countries, the aim of this year's campaign is to increase the awareness of clinicians, scientists, and the public about the use of an integrative pain care approach, which emphasizes non-drug, self-management care.

Integrative Pain Care is a person centered model of pain care based on principles and practices of integrative medicine. Integrative medicine is a form of medical therapy that combines practices and treatments from alternative medicine with conventional medicine.

https://www.iasp-pain.org/

Migraine World Summit

In more than half of all fibromyalgia sufferers, one of the accompanying symptoms is migraines. Fibromyalgia Association Canada - FAC has partnered with Migraine World Summit to bring you up to date news on migraines.

Partnering with Migraine World Summit will allow FAC to bring you information on what world leading migraine experts, doctors, and specialists recommend for migraines. The Migraine World Summit offers valuable resources year round but once a year they hold a free 9 day Summit. This year the Migraine World Summit 2023 is beginning March 8. Each presentation is 30 minutes and they will have 4 presentations each day. Now in its eighth year, Migraine World Summit interviews leading migraine and headache specialists who explain what you can do to change the impact of migraines on your life. You won't hear any repetitive information because these are the experts doing the research, testing the medications, developing the breakthrough technologies, seeing patients daily, and publishing the journal articles that are progressing our understanding of migraines and how to manage them.

MIGRAINE WORLD SUMMIT®

To register for this free summit go to http://www.migraineworldsummit.com?afmc=j5

Featured Research

Dr. Roberta Woodgate

Advancing patient-centered care in young people living with chronic pain:

Chronic pain is a common public health problem in young people. Many (one in five) Canadian youth experience chronic pain, and suffer poor physical, academic, social, and developmental effects, along with increased mental health challenges.

The goal of this national study is to expand patient-centered care for young people with chronic pain, which means providing care that is respectful of, and responds to individual patient choices and needs.

Purpose: The purpose of this 4-year qualitative, arts-based, patient oriented national study is to advance patient-centered care for young people with chronic pain.

Aims:

1. Detail the experiences of young people with chronic pain including their needs, priorities for care, and preferred outcomes.
2. Co-design arts-based knowledge translation (KT) products to advance key stakeholders' understanding of the experiences of young people with chronic pain.
3. Evaluate the KT products and engage key stakeholders in recommendations on the use of arts-based KT products to advance patient-centered care (PCC) for young people with chronic pain.

If you are interested in this study go to https://fibrocanada.ca/research/research-participants-wanted/

Fibromyalgia Community Conference

FAC was delighted to be invited to participate in the first ever “Fibromyalgia Community Conference” which occurred November 4 th and 5th 2022.

There was a wealth of information offered during this free, two-day virtual fibromyalgia conference, with a variety of speakers presenting. FAC had a virtual Booth at the event where information about FAC was shared and the FACes of Fibromyalgia video was posted. This video was a huge hit. The video made its way to the Main Stage and many posts of the video were shared by people around the world. When the conference launched at 10pm on Friday, November 4th, people logged in from places like the US, Canada, the UK, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, and more. The visibility and awareness of FAC was incredible.

Many thanks to the organizers of this great event, Melissa Talwar, Executive Director of Fibromyalgia Support Network, Brandi Privitera of Fibromyalgia Support Network and Estela and Juana Mata from Looms4Lupus.com. Thank you for inviting FAC to be part of this outstanding conference.

Featured Research

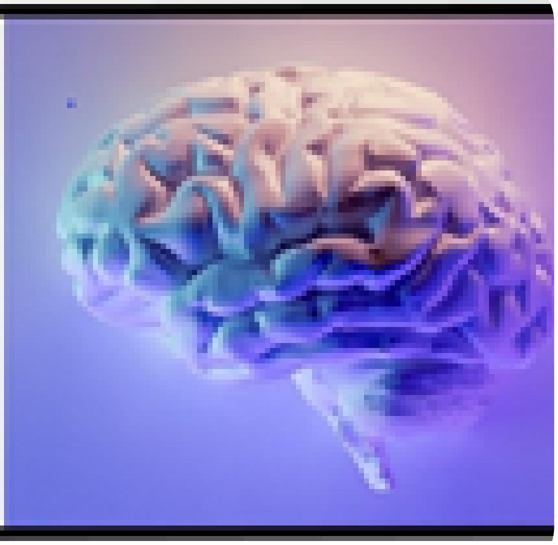
Classic Psychedelics in Chronic Pain Survey:

Principal Investigator: Dr. Kathleen Hodgin

The University of Alabama at Birmingham, Alabama is currently conducting an online research study to learn more about classic psychedelics in relation to fibromyalgia and chronic pain. The survey is intended for adults age 18 and up, with a history of fibromyalgia and/or chronic widespread pain, who have taken a classic psychedelic at least once in the past.

The purpose of this research is to learn more about how classic psychedelics might interact with chronic widespread pain, such as in fibromyalgia. They are interested in hearing from individuals who have experienced chronic, widespread pain, and have taken a classic psychedelic. Please do not count drugs such as cannabis/marijuana, MDMA/ecstasy, MDA, ketamine, PCP, nitrous oxide, or salvia divinorum.

For more information please go to https://fibrocanada.ca/research/research-participants-wanted/



FIBROMYALGIA ASSOCIATION CANADA

Volunteering

Want to volunteer somewhere fun, where you can share your talents, your passions, and your interests in a supportive environment?

Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC) wants you to participate at your own pace, in a safe space, where we understand one another because of our lived experience.

You can help support yourself and others with Fibromyalgia as you contribute when you can and in whatever way you can. There is absolutely no pressure.

You can be on a committee of your choice, volunteering in a positive space.

Join FAC today.

It is free and you do only what you can when you can.