

What is the ME | FM Society of BC?

The ME|FM Society of BC is a registered Canadian charity working to support and advocate for people living with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) and/or Fibromyalgia (FM). Their purpose is to educate and increase awareness of ME and FM within the health care community, government and public; to provide information and resources for patients and their families; and to promote state-of-the-art research, testing, diagnosis and treatments. They have aided thousands of people throughout BC, and recently completed a groundbreaking pilot study mapping the unmet needs of British Columbians with ME. They are also dedicated to building an inclusive, accessible organization that creates opportunities for the participation of patients, carers and family members at every level. Learn more: www.mefm.bc.ca

What is Myalgic Encephalomyelitis?

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) - also referred to as ME/CFS, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or SEID - is a complex chronic disease characterized by debilitating exhaustion unrelieved by sleep, as well as [exacerbations or "flares"](#) of its many symptoms after even the most minor physical or mental activity. Impacting many body systems, ME can cause everything from chronic pain, cardiac issues and immune problems to neurological symptoms like movement disorders, light sensitivity and intermittent dyslexia. "Mild" ME typically reduces function by [at least 50%](#), while [studies report](#) that moderate to severe cases can resemble living with heart failure or end-stage cancer for decades. It has the [lowest quality-of-life score](#) of all common diseases, and prior to the pandemic, affected [over half a million Canadians](#) and an estimated [17-24 million people worldwide](#). Despite this, ME is seldom taught in medical schools, and an estimated [90% of patients](#) aren't even diagnosed. Many cases have a post-viral onset, and the illness can be [triggered by coronaviruses](#) such as SARS, MERS...and unfortunately, [COVID-19](#). [Learn more here](#).

What is Fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia (FM) is a complex chronic illness that affects [over half a million Canadians](#) and around [3-6% of people worldwide](#). Characterized by widespread burning pain and fatigue unrelieved by sleep, it can also cause other debilitating symptoms including brain fog, irregular heartbeat, severe sleep problems and digestive issues. As with ME, symptoms can vary not just from person to person but from day to day, and some patients may even appear superficially healthy. Nevertheless, fibromyalgic pain can be unrelenting, and the UK's National Health Service ranks it as one of the [20 most painful health conditions](#). The illness is also associated with impaired joints, [fascia](#) and other connective tissues – an issue shared with [Ehlers-Danlos syndrome \(EDS\)](#), a genetic disorder with which it can co-occur. In fact, fibromyalgia can occur alongside several other serious conditions, including [irritable bowel syndrome](#), [migraines](#) and [autoimmune diseases](#), and the overlapping symptoms can affect every aspect of a person's daily life. [Learn more here](#).