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Pathogenesis and Treatment of Fibromyalgia

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Associate Dean for Clinical and Translational Research
The University of Michigan

Fall 2008
M2 Musculoskeletal



Mechanistic Characterization of Pain

Peripheral (nociceptive)

- Primarily due to inflammation or mechanical damage in periphery
- NSAID, opioid responsive
- Responds to procedures
- Behavioral factors minor
- Examples
 - Osteoarthritis
 - Rheumatoid arthritis
 - Cancer pain

Neuropathic

- Damage or entrapment of peripheral nerves
- Responds to both peripheral and central pharmacological therapy

Central (non-nociceptive)

- Primarily due to a central disturbance in pain processing
- Tricyclic, neuroactive compounds most effective
- Behavioral factors more prominent
- Examples
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Irritable bowel syndrome
 - Tension headache
 - Idiopathic low back pain

Paradigm Shift in Fibromyalgia

American College of Rheumatology (ACR) Criteria

- Discrete illness
- Focal areas of tenderness
- Psychologic and behavioral factors nearly always present and negative



PD-EMEL Source Undetermined

- Chronic widespread pain
- Tenderness in ≥ 11 of 18 tender points
- Final common pathway
- Part of a larger continuum
- Many somatic symptoms, diffuse tenderness
- Psychologic and behavioral factors play roles in some individuals



PD-EMEL Source Undetermined

Overlap Between Fibromyalgia and Related Syndromes

Fibromyalgia

- 2%-4% of population
- Defined by widespread pain and tenderness

Regional Pain Syndromes

- eg, irritable bowel [IBS]
- Painful bladder / interstitial cystitis [PBS/IC]
- TMD
- Tension HA
- Vulvodynia

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)

- 1% of population
- Fatigue and 4 of 8 “minor criteria”

Psychiatric Disorders

- Major depression
- OCD
- Bipolar
- PTSD
- GAD
- Panic attack

Somatoform Disorders

- 4% of population
- multiple unexplained symptoms — no “organic” findings



LBP = low back pain; TMD = temporomandibular disorders.
Claw and Chrousos. *Neuroimmunomodulation*. 1997;4:134-53.

Shared features

- Characterized by multiple somatic symptoms and high rates of comorbidities with other related syndromes
- 1.5 – 2X more common in females
- Strong familial/genetic underpinnings
- Triggered or exacerbated by “stressors”
- Pain and/or sensory amplification most reproducible pathophysiological feature
- Dysautonomia, neuroendocrine dysfunction, and neurogenic inflammation also commonly noted, but of unclear physiological significance

“Stressors” Capable of Triggering These Illnesses (Supported by Case-Control Studies^{1,2})

- Early life stressors³
 - Children born in 1958 who had experienced a motor traffic accident or who were institutionalized were 1.5 – 2X more likely to have CWP 42 years later
- Peripheral pain syndromes (e.g. RA, SLE, osteoarthritis)⁴
- Physical trauma (automobile accidents)⁵
- Certain catastrophic events (war but not natural disasters)⁶
- Infections
- Psychological stress/distress

Sources: 1. Clauw and Chrousos. Neuroimmunomodulation. 1997;4:134-53. 2. McLean and Clauw. Med Hypotheses. 2004;63:653-8.

3. Jones et al. ACR Meeting. 2007. 4. Clauw et al. JCR. 1997.

5. McBeth. ACR Meeting. 2006. 6. Clauw et al. J Occup Environ Med. 2003;45:1040-8.

Genetics of Fibromyalgia

- Familial predisposition¹
 - Most recent work by Arnold, et al suggests >8 odds ratio (OR) for first-degree relatives, and much less familial aggregation (OR 2) with major mood disorders
 - Much stronger with bipolarity, obsessive compulsive disorder
- Genes that may be involved
 - 5-HT_{2A} receptor polymorphism T/T phenotype²
 - Serotonin transporter³
 - Dopamine D₄ receptor exon III repeat polymorphism⁴
 - COMT (catecholamine o-methyl transferase)⁵

Conditions Characterized by Widespread Secondary Hyperalgesia / Allodynia

- Fibromyalgia
- Temperomandibular disorder^{1,2}
- Headache (tension > migraine)^{3,4}
- Idiopathic low back pain^{5,6}
- Vulvodynia/vulvar vestibulitis⁷
- Whiplash associated disorder⁸
- IBS^{9,10}

Sources: 1. Maixner et al. Pain. 1995;63:341-51. 2. Kashima et al. Cranio. 1999;17:241-246.
3. Langemark et al. Arch Neurol. 1993;50:1061-4. 4. Buchgreitz et al. Pain. 2006;123:19-27.
5. Giesecke et al. Arthritis Rheum. 2004;50:613-23. 6. Giesbrecht and Battie. Phys Ther. 2005;85:1085-92.
7. Giesecke et al. Obstet Gynecol. 2004;104:126-33. 8. Lemming et al. Clin J Pain. 2005;21:412-21.
9. Whitehead et al. Gastroenterology. 1990;98:336-40. 10. Mertz et al. Gastroenterology. 1995;109:40-52.

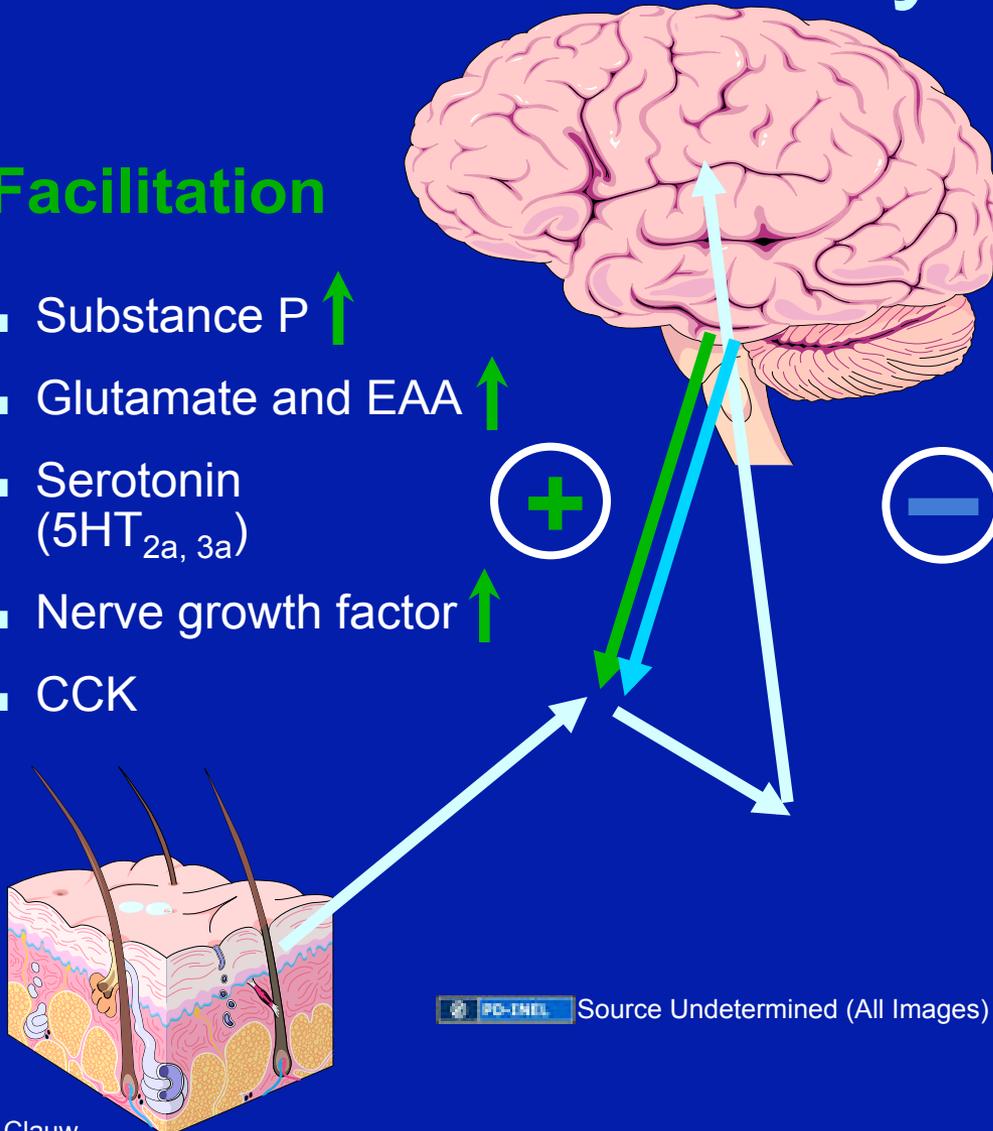
Supraspinal Influences on Pain and Sensory Processing

Facilitation

- Substance P ↑
- Glutamate and EAA ↑
- Serotonin (5HT_{2a, 3a}) ↑
- Nerve growth factor ↑
- CCK ↑

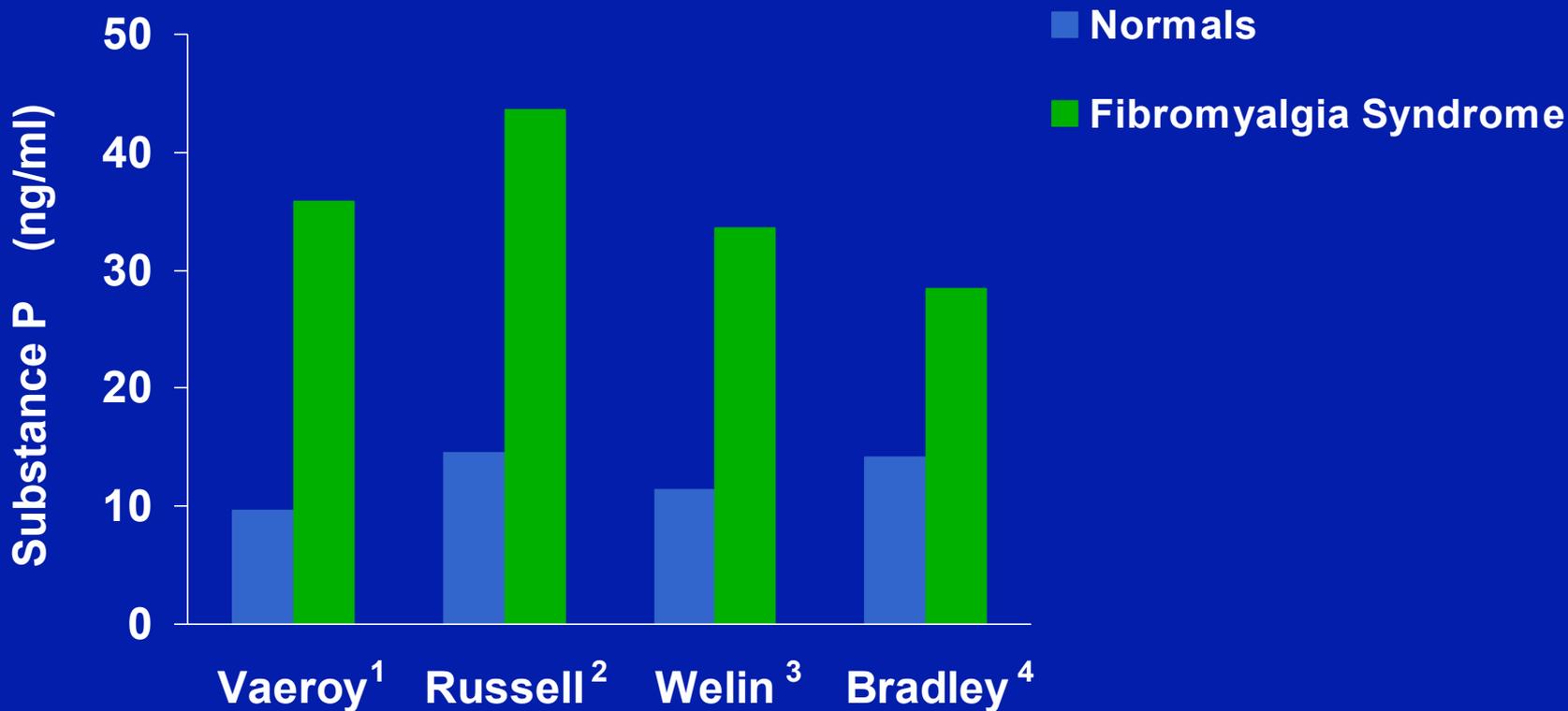
Inhibition

- Descending anti-nociceptive pathways ↓
- Norepinephrine-serotonin (5HT_{1a,b}), dopamine ↓
- Opioids ↑
- GABA
- Cannabinoids
- Adenosine



PC-INEL Source Undetermined (All Images)

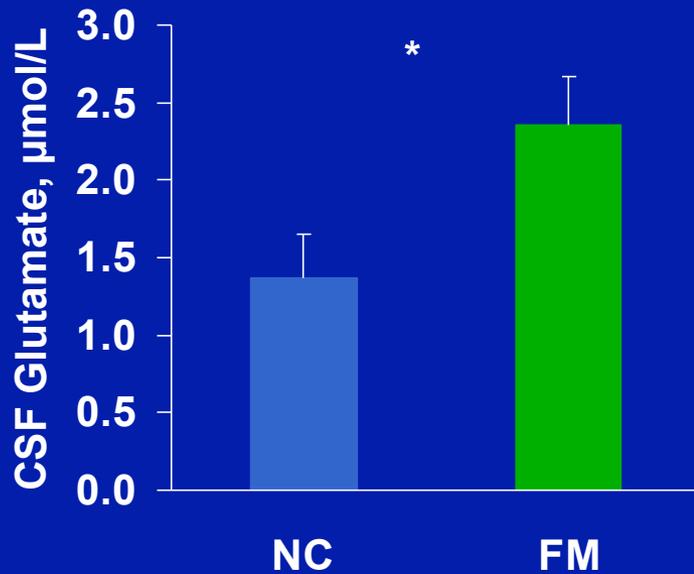
Fibromyalgia Cerebrospinal Fluid Substance P



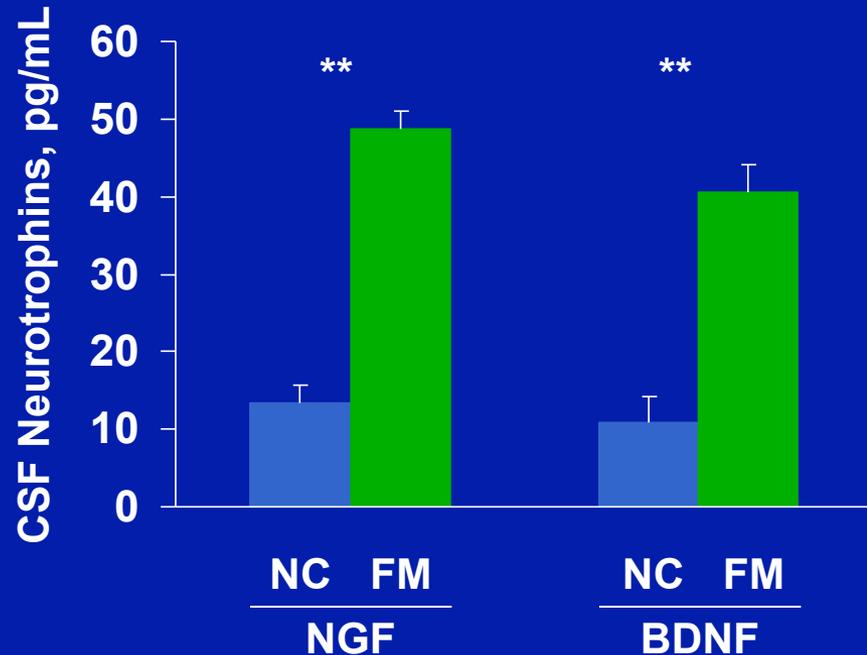
1. Vaeroy et al. *Pain*. 1988;32:21-6. 2. Russell et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 1994;37:1593-601.
3. Liu et al. *Peptides*. 2000;21:853-60. 4. Bradley and Alarcon. *Arthritis Rheum*. 1999;42:2731-2.

Increased Spinal Fluid Levels Of Glutamate and Neurotrophins

EAA



Neurotrophins

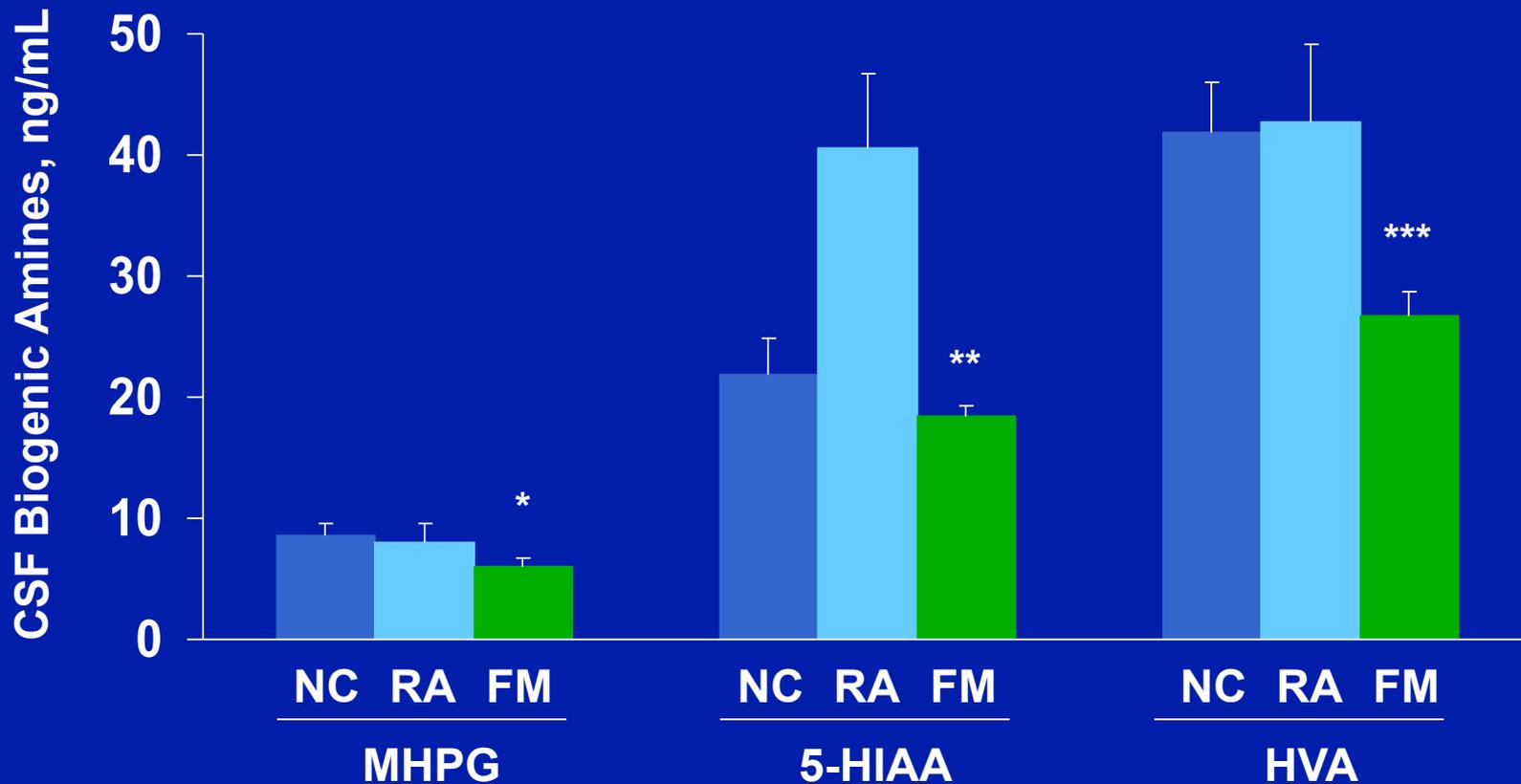


*P<0.003; **P<0.001.

BDNF, brain-derived neurotrophic factor; EAA, excitatory amino acid; NGF, nerve growth factor.
N=20 patients with fibromyalgia and 20 control subjects.

Sarchielli et al. *J Pain*. 2007;8:737-45.

Decreased Spinal Fluid Levels Of Biogenic Monoamines



*P=0.028; **P=0.057; ***P=0.005 vs nonfibromyalgia controls.

5-HIAA, 5-hydroxyindole acetic acid; HVA, homovanillic acid; MHPG, 3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenethylene glycol.
N=17 patients with fibromyalgia, 5 patients with rheumatoid arthritis, and 7 control subjects.

Russell et al. *Arthritis Rheum.* 1992;35:550-6.

“Pain Matrix” – Pain is Processed in at Least Three Domains in CNS

- Sensory: where it is and how much it hurts
 - Primary and secondary somatosensory cortices
 - Thalamus
 - Posterior insula
- Affective: emotional valence of pain
 - Anterior cingulate cortex
 - Anterior insula
 - Amygdala
- Cognitive: similar to affective plus prefrontal regions

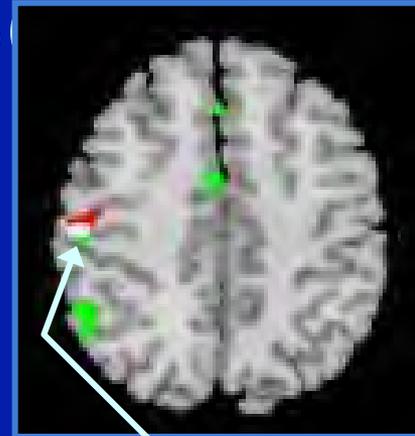
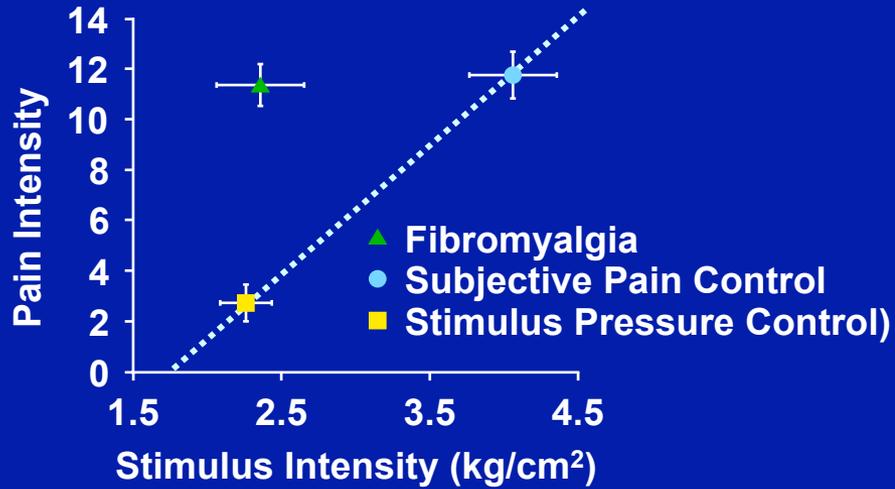
fMRI of Evoked Pressure Pain in Fibromyalgia and Related Conditions

- Is there objective evidence of augmented pain processing in fibromyalgia?¹
- Role of depression in pain processing in FM²
- Role of cognitive factors in pain processing in FM
 - Locus of control
 - Catastrophizing³
- fMRI changes of augmented central processing of pain also seen in idiopathic low back pain⁴

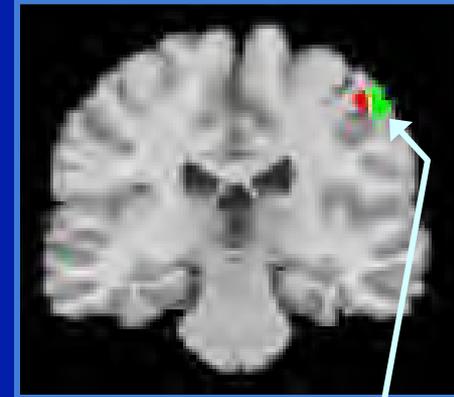
Sources:

1. Gracely et al. *Arthritis Rheum.* 2002;46:1333-43.
2. Giesecke et al. *Arthritis Rheum.* 2003;48:2916-22.
3. Gracely et al. *Brain.* 2004;127:835-43.
4. Giesecke et al. *Arthritis Rheum.* 2004;50:613-23.

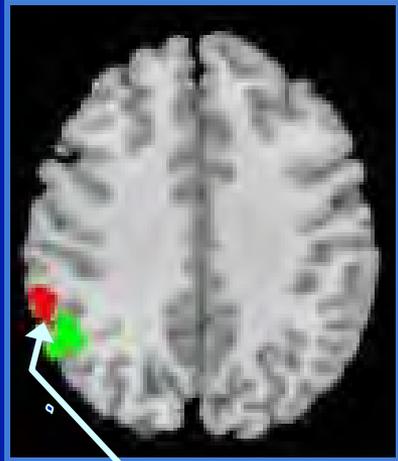
Stimuli and Responses During Pain S



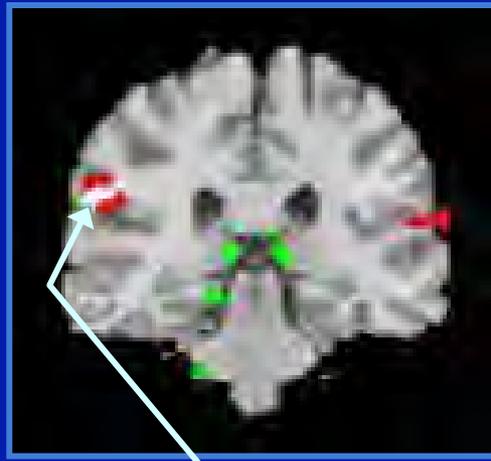
SI



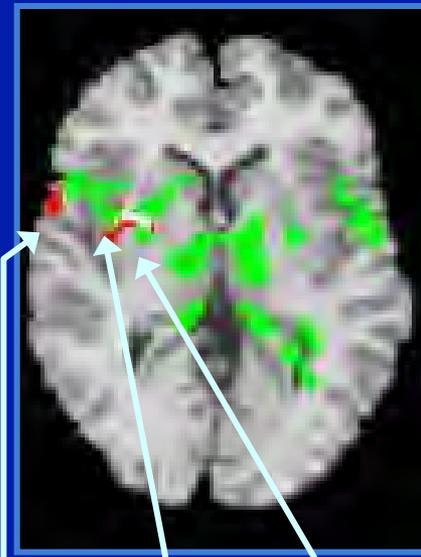
SI (decrease)



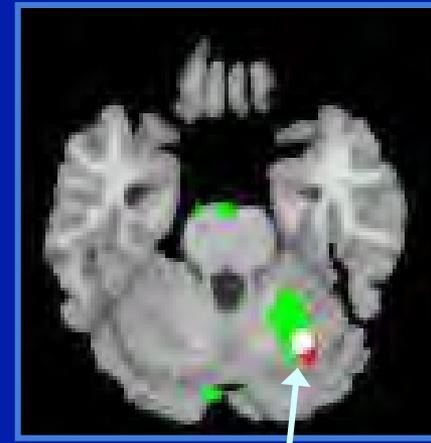
IPL



SII



STG, Insula, Putamen



Cerebellum

STG=superior temporal gyri; SI=primary somatosensory cortex; SII=secondary somatosensory cortex; IPL=inferior parietal lobule.

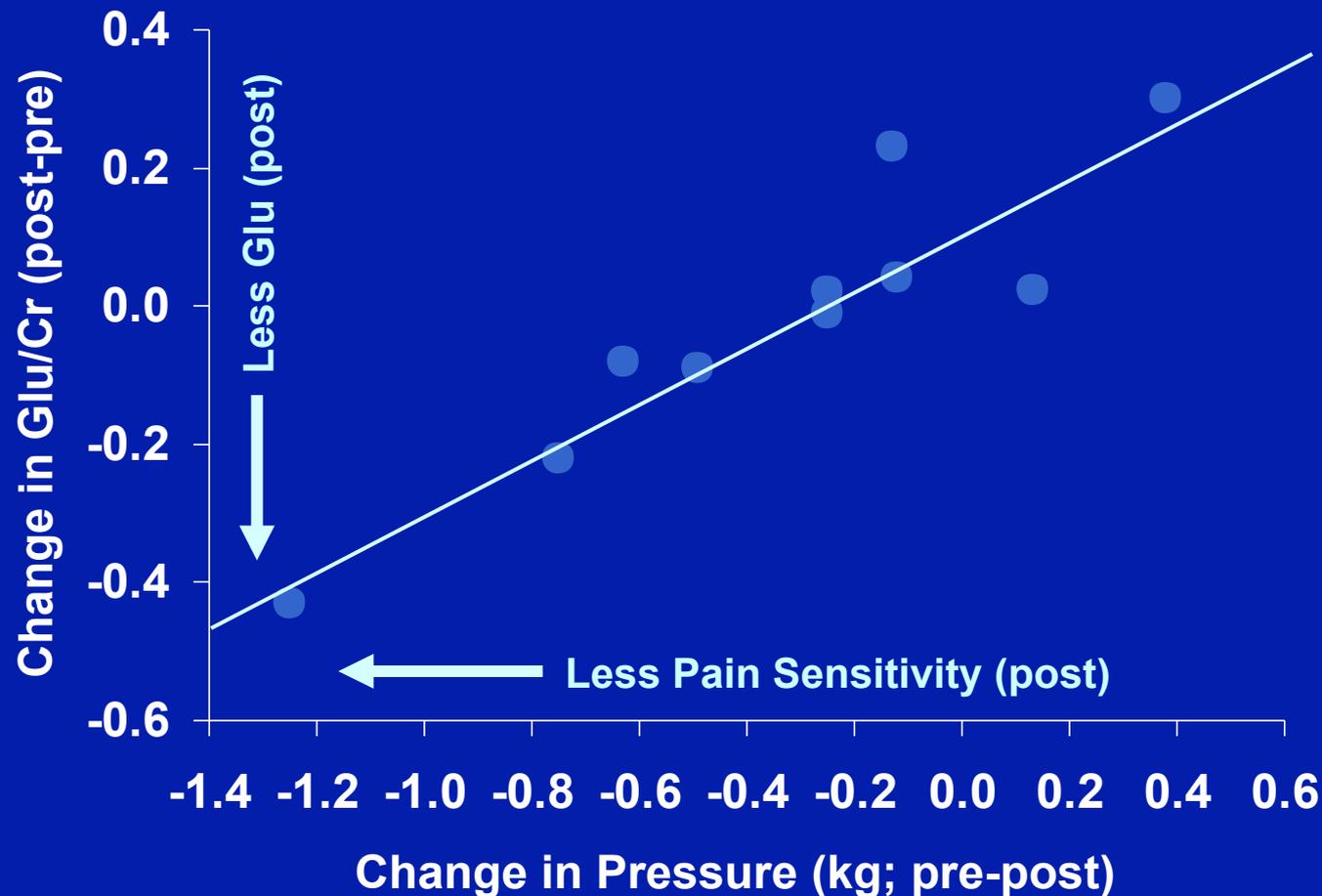
Specific Underlying Mechanisms in Fibromyalgia

- Global problem with sensory processing (i.e. interoception)
 - FM patients equally sensitive to loudness of auditory tones¹
 - Insular hyper-reactivity consistently seen²⁻⁴
 - H-MRS studies of glutamate levels in posterior insula⁵

Sources:

1. Geisser et al. *J Pain*. 2008;9:417-22.
2. Gracely et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2002;46:1333-43.
3. Giesecke et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2004;50:613-23.
4. Cook et al. *J Rheumatol*. 2004;31:364-78.
5. Harris et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2008;58:903-7.

Reduction in Glu is Associated with Reduced Experimental Pressure Pain in FM



$r=-0.95$; $P<0.001$.

Specific Underlying Mechanisms in Fibromyalgia

- Decreased descending analgesic activity
 - Absent or attenuated DNIC in FM and IBS¹⁻³
 - Brainstem activations with conditioning stimulus seen in controls but not in FM patients⁴

Source:

1. Kosek and Hansson. *Pain*. 1997;70:41-51.
2. Julien et al. *Pain*. 2005;114:295-302.
3. Wilder-Smith and Robert-Yap. *World J. Gastroenterol*. 2007;13:3699-704.
4. Gracely et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2006 (abstract).

There is a Deficiency of Descending Analgesic Activity in FM:^{1,2} Which one?

Opioids

- Normal or high levels of CSF enkephalins³
- Never been administered in RCT but most feel that opioids are ineffective or marginally effective
- Harris recently used PET to show decreased mu opioid receptor binding in FM⁴

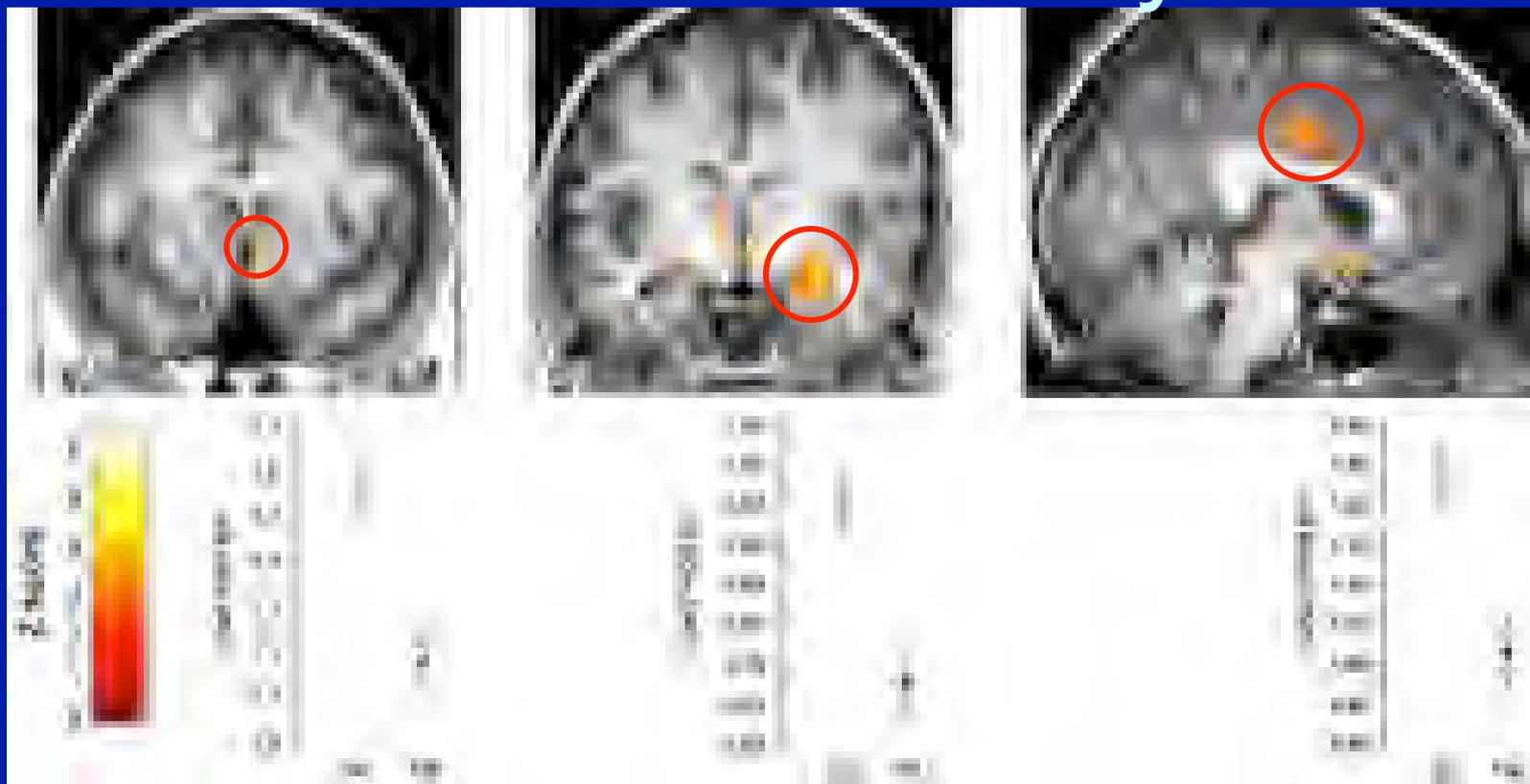
Noradrenergic/Serotonergic

- Low levels of biogenic monoamines in CSF in FM⁵
- Nearly any class of drug that raises both serotonin and norepinephrine has demonstrated efficacy in FM

Sources:

1. Kosek and Hansson. *Pain*. 1997;70:41-51.
2. Julien et al. *Pain*. 2005;114:295-302.
3. Baraniuk et al. *BMC Musculoskelet Disord*. 2004;5:48.
4. Harris et al. *J Neurosci*. 2007;27:10000-6.
5. Russell et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 1992;35:550-6.

FM Patients Have Reduced MOR Availability



	L NAcc	IAMY	L dCC
Z	4.12	4.21	3.39
P-Value*	<0.05	< 0.05	<0.05
%D BP	33.1(7.1)	31.1(7.0)	21.5(6.4)

*corrected

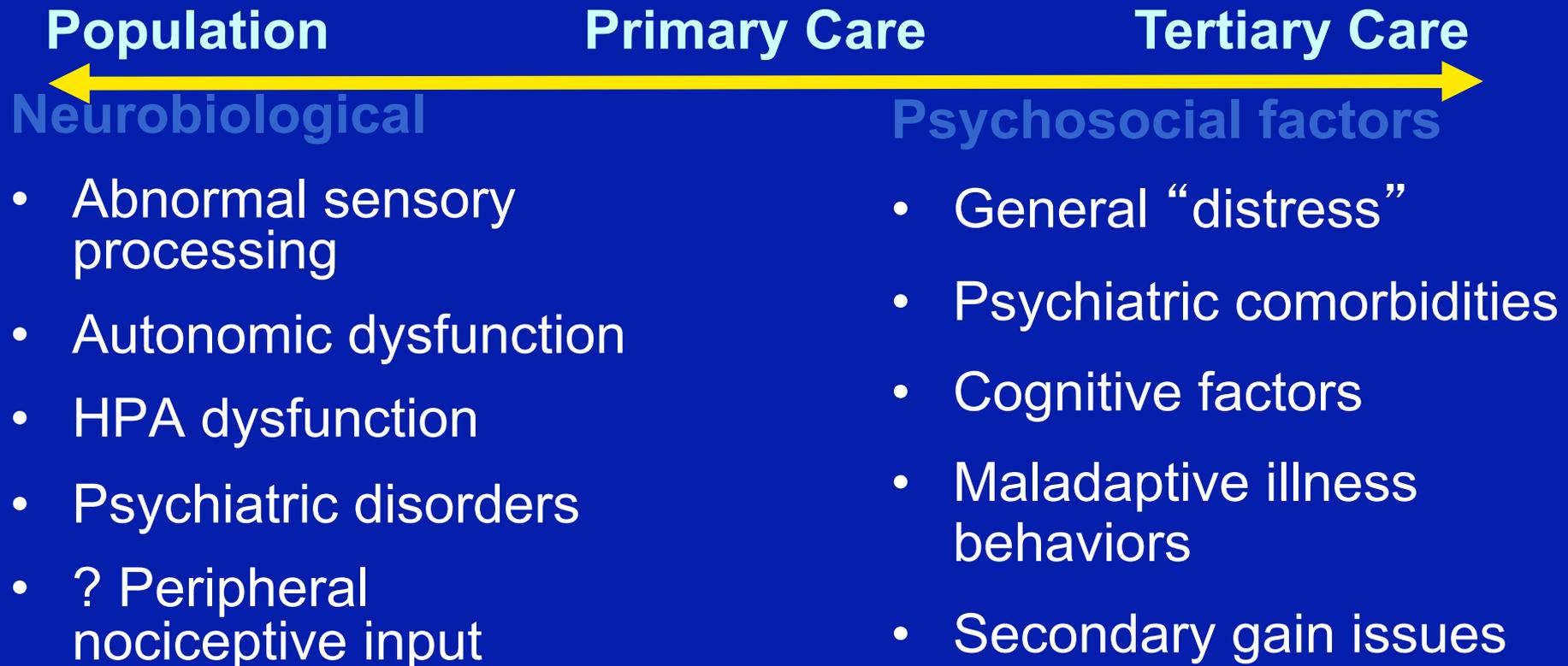
Is Chronic Pain a Neurodegenerative Disease?

- Apkarian¹ was first to show that chronic pain may be a neurodegenerative disease, showing
 - Decreased gray matter density in DLPFC and thalamus
 - Related to length of pain
- More recently seen in other pain states including
 - Headache (insula and ACC)²
 - IBS (insula and ACC)³
 - Fibromyalgia⁴ (multiple regions)
 - PTSD⁵ (insula)

Sources:

1. Apkarian et al. *J Neurosci*. 2004;24:10410-5. 2. Schmidt-Wilcke et al. *Pain*. 2007;132 Suppl 1:S109-16.
3. Davis et al. *Neurology*. 2008;70:153-4. 4. Kuchinad et al. *J Neurosci*. 2007;27:4004-7.
5. Chen et al. *Psychiatry Res*. 2006;146:65-72.

The Biopsychosocial Continuum



FM: From Mechanism to Treatment

- This is primarily a neural disease and “central” factors play a critical role
- This is a polygenic disorder
- There is a deficiency of noradrenergic-serotonergic activity and/or excess levels of excitatory neurotransmitters
- Lack of sleep or exercise increase pain and other somatic sx, even in normals
- How FM patients think about their pain (cognitions) may directly influence pain levels
- Treatments aimed at the periphery (i.e., drugs, injections) are not very efficacious
- There will be subgroups of FM needing different treatments
- Drugs that raise norepinephrine and serotonin, or lower levels of excitatory neurotransmitters, will be efficacious in some
- Exercise, “sleep hygiene,” and other behavioral interventions are effective therapies for biological reasons
- Cognitive therapies are effective in FM and have a biological substrate

So How Do I Really Diagnose Fibromyalgia? The History – I

- Pain
 - Current and lifetime history of widespread pain
 - The more widespread, the more likely it is fibromyalgia
 - “I hurt all over”
 - Pain felt in any area of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal regions
 - Often “unpredictable”, worsened by stress
 - Often accompanied by stiffness, non-dermatomal paresthesias

So How Do I Really Diagnose Fibromyalgia? The History – II

- Other somatic symptoms
 - Fatigue
 - Not made better by rest or exercise
 - Memory difficulties
 - Difficulty with memory and concentration
 - Insomnia and sleep disturbances
 - Co-morbid syndromes
 - Irritable bowel
 - Interstitial cystitis
 - Headache
 - TMJ/TMD

So How Do I Really Diagnose Fibromyalgia?

Family History

- Family history of other pain syndromes

Social History

- Symptoms often triggered or exacerbated by “stressors”

Past Medical History

- Regional somatic and visceral pain syndromes
- Psychiatric disorders

Physical Exam

- Normal except for diffuse tenderness
- Tenderness not just confined to the joints

Diagnostic Work-up

- Intensity of evaluation depends largely on history
 - If symptoms acute or sub-acute extensive evaluation necessary
 - If symptoms have lasted for many years and history is classic virtually no work-up is necessary
- Laboratory evaluation at some point in illness
 - ESR, CRP
 - CBC and chemistry profile
 - TSH, Vitamin D
 - Avoid serological studies e.g. ANA, RF

Treatment of Fibromyalgia and Other Central Pain Syndromes

Education

**Pharmacological
Therapy**

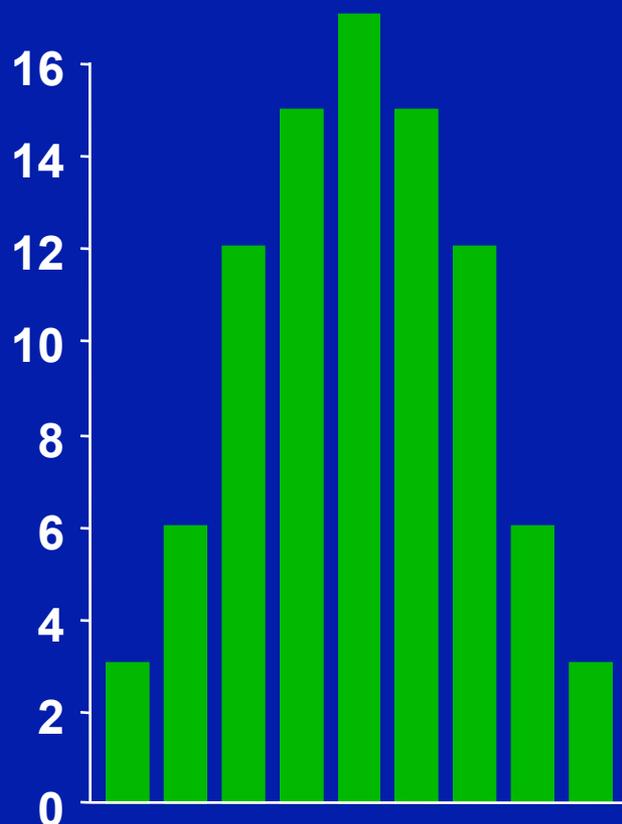
**Aerobic
Exercise**

**Cognitive Behavioral
Therapy (CBT)**

Summary

Increased

- Neurotransmitters
 - Serotonin
 - Norepinephrine
 - Opioids
- Exercise
- Sleep



Pain Threshold

Decreased

- Neurotransmitters
 - Glutamate
 - Substance P
 - Nerve growth factor
- Cognitions
 - Catastrophizing
 - External locus of control

Pharmacological Therapies

Strong Evidence

- Dual reuptake inhibitors such as
 - Tricyclic compounds (amitriptyline, cyclobenzaprine)
 - SNRIs and NSRIs (milnacipran, duloxetine, venlafaxine?)
- Anticonvulsants (e.g., pregabalin, gabapentin)

Modest Evidence

- Tramadol
- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)
- Gamma hydroxybutyrate
- Dopamine agonists

Weak Evidence

- Growth hormone, 5-hydroxytryptamine, tropisetron, S-adenosyl-L-methionine (SAMe)

No Evidence

- Opioids, corticosteroids, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, benzodiazepine and nonbenzodiazepine hypnotics, guanifenesin

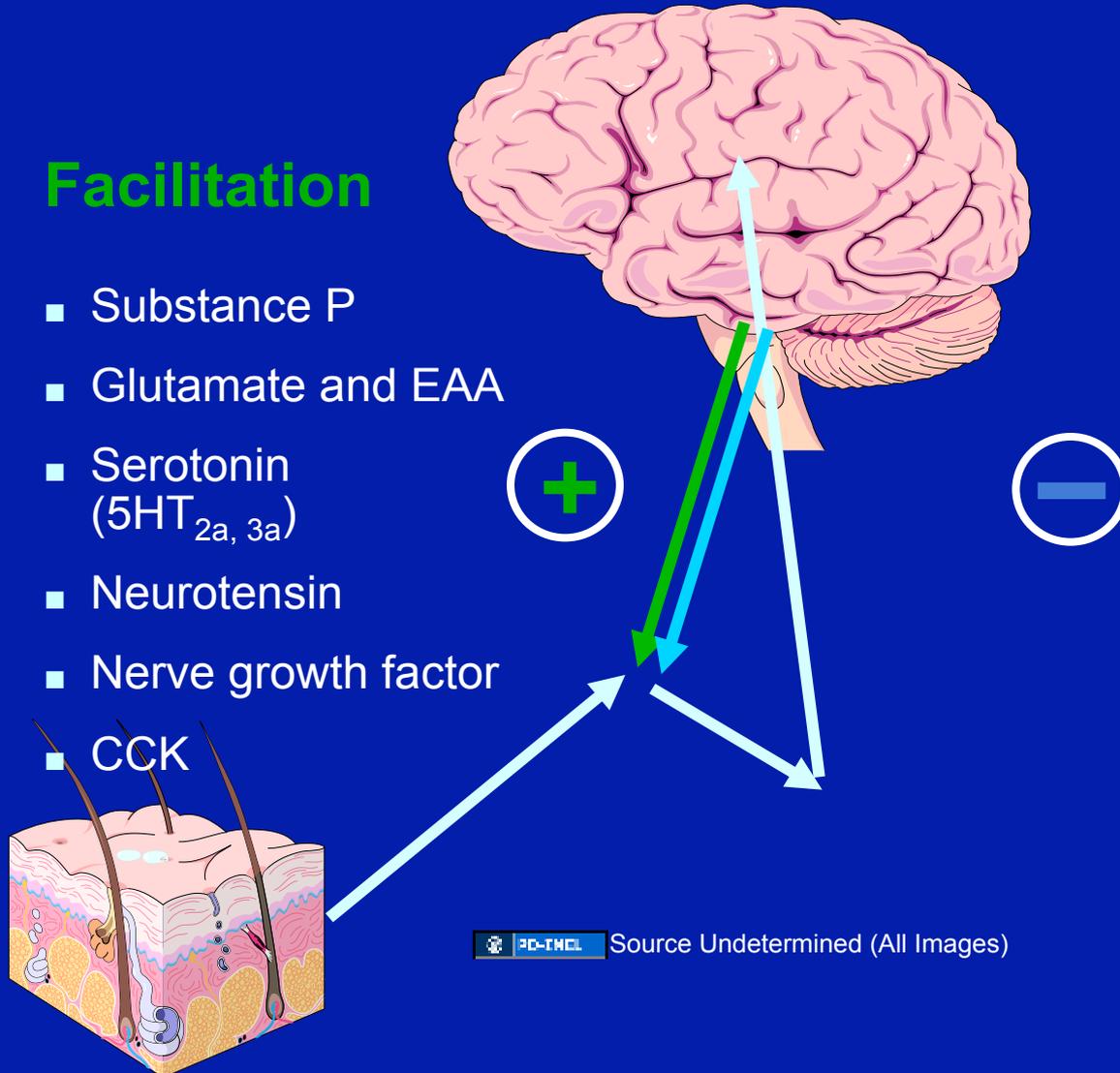
Supraspinal Influences on Pain Processing

Facilitation

- Substance P
- Glutamate and EAA
- Serotonin (5HT_{2a, 3a})
- Neurotensin
- Nerve growth factor
- CCK

Inhibition

- Descending anti-nociceptive pathways
- Norepinephrine-serotonin (5HT_{1a,b}), dopamine
- Opioids
- GABA
- Cannabinoids
- Adenosine

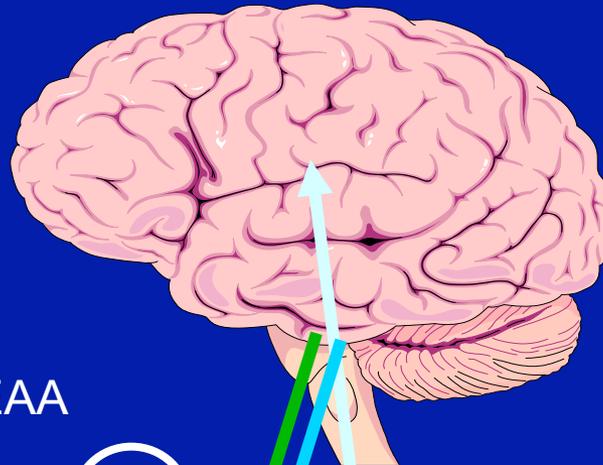
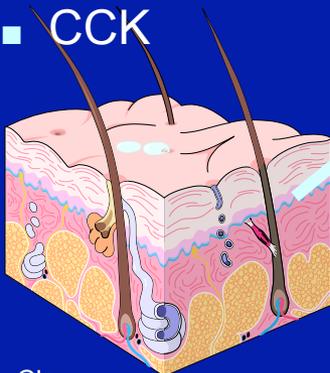


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Likely MOA of Dual-Reuptake Inhibitors

Facilitation

- Substance P
- Glutamate and EAA
- Serotonin (5HT_{2a, 3a})
- Neurotensin
- Nerve growth factor
- CCK



Inhibition

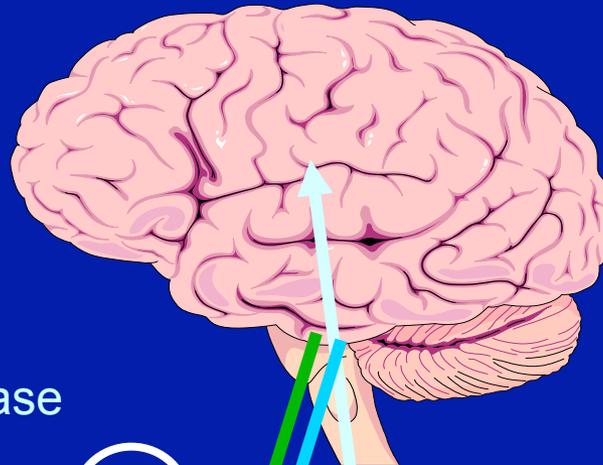
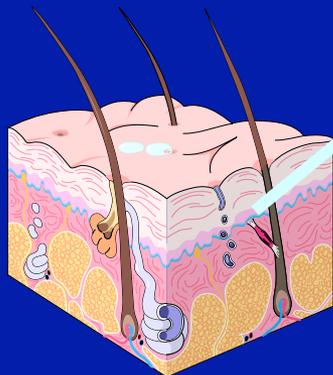
- Descending anti-nociceptive pathways
- Norepinephrine-serotonin (5HT_{1a,b}), dopamine
- Opioids
- GABA
- Cannabinoids
- Adenosine

 PD-INCL Source Undetermined (All Images)

Possible MOA of Pregabalin/ Gabapentin

Facilitation

- Substance P
 - Decrease SP release in inflammatory states¹
- Glutamate and EAA
 - Inhibit SP-induced glutamate release²



Inhibition

- Descending anti-nociceptive pathways
 - Norepinephrine-serotonin (5HT_{1a,b}), dopamine
 - Opioids
 - GABA
 - Cannabinoids
 - Adenosine

Sources: 1. Fehrenbacher et al. *Pain*. 2003;105:133-41. 2. Maneuf et al. *Pain*. 2001;93:191-6.

There is a Deficiency of Descending Analgesic Activity in FM:^{1,2} Which one?

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Noradrenergic/Serotonergic

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- Nearly any class of drug that raises both serotonin and norepinephrine has demonstrated efficacy in FM

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2. Julien et al. *Pain*. 2005;114:295-302.
3. Baraniuk et al. *BMC Musculoskelet Disord*. 2004;5:48.
4. Harris et al. *J Neurosci*. 2007;27:10000-6.
5. Russell et al. *Arthritis Rheum*. 1992;35:550-6.

Relative Activity on Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Among Antidepressants



Citalopram

Venlafaxine

Amitriptyline

Maprotiline

Fluvoxamine

Duloxetine

Milnacipran

Desipramine

Sertraline

Imipramine

Nortriptyline

Paroxetine

Reboxetine

Fluoxetine

Antidepressant

Analgesic/Antidepressant

Nonpharmacological Therapies

Strong Evidence

- Education
- Aerobic exercise
- Cognitive behavior therapy

Modest Evidence

- Strength training
- Hypnotherapy, biofeedback, balneotherapy

Weak Evidence

- Acupuncture, chiropractic, manual and massage therapy, electrotherapy, ultrasound

No Evidence

- Tender (trigger) point injections, flexibility exercise

Symptoms of Pain, Fatigue, etc.

- Nociceptive processes (damage or inflammation of tissues)
- Disordered sensory processing



Functional Consequences of Symptoms

- Increased Distress
- Decreased activity
- Isolation
- Poor sleep
- Maladaptive illness behaviors

Dually Focused Treatment

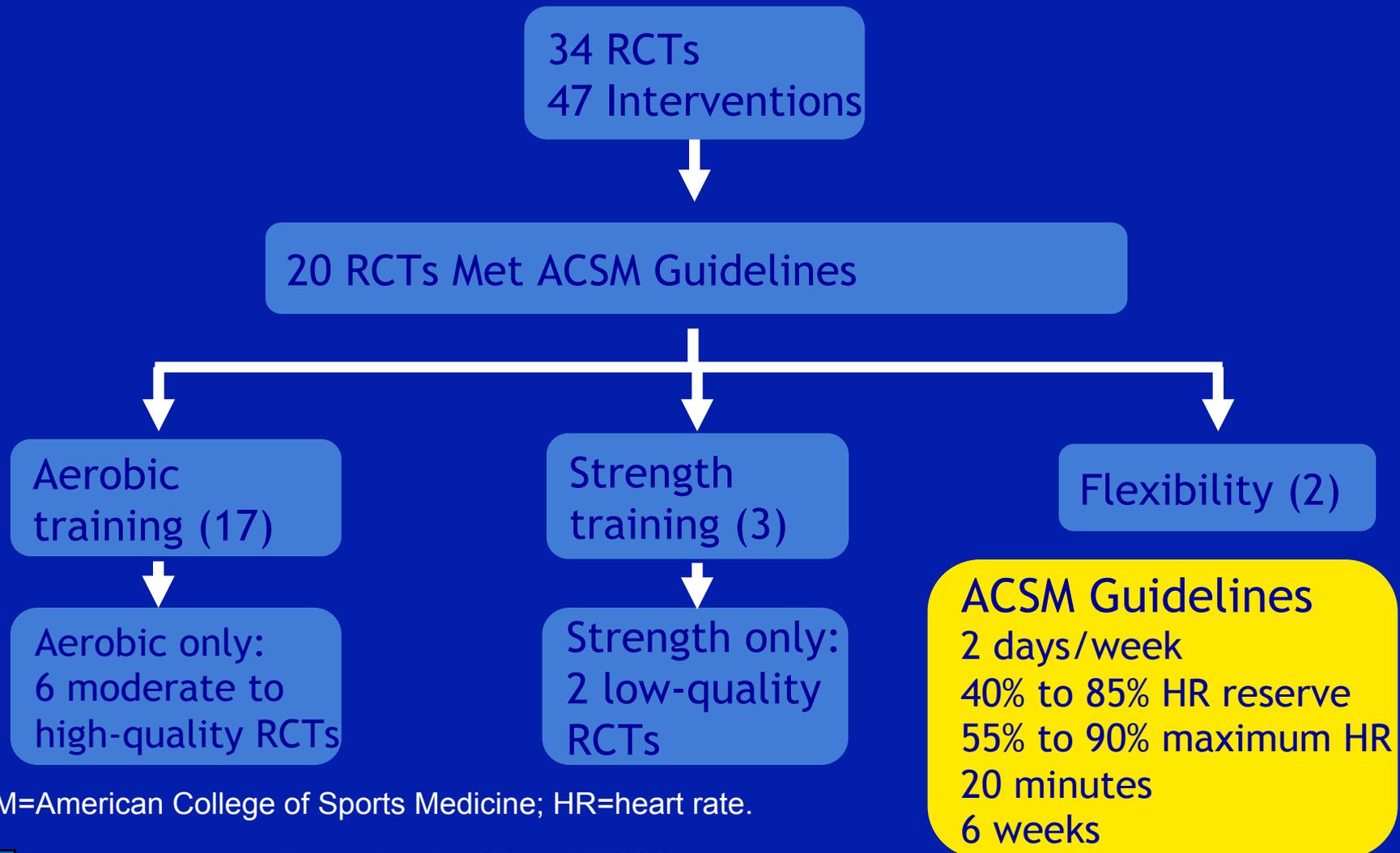
- Pharmacological therapies to improve symptoms
- Nonpharmacological therapies to address dysfunction



Exercise

- Aerobic exercise nearly universally beneficial; tolerance, compliance, adherence are biggest issues
- To maximize benefits
 - Begin several months after pharmacologic therapy
 - Begin with low-impact exercises; avoid strength training until late
 - Both physician and patient should consider this as a “drug”
- Less evidence supporting strengthening, stretching

Exercise for Treating Fibromyalgia: Cochrane Review

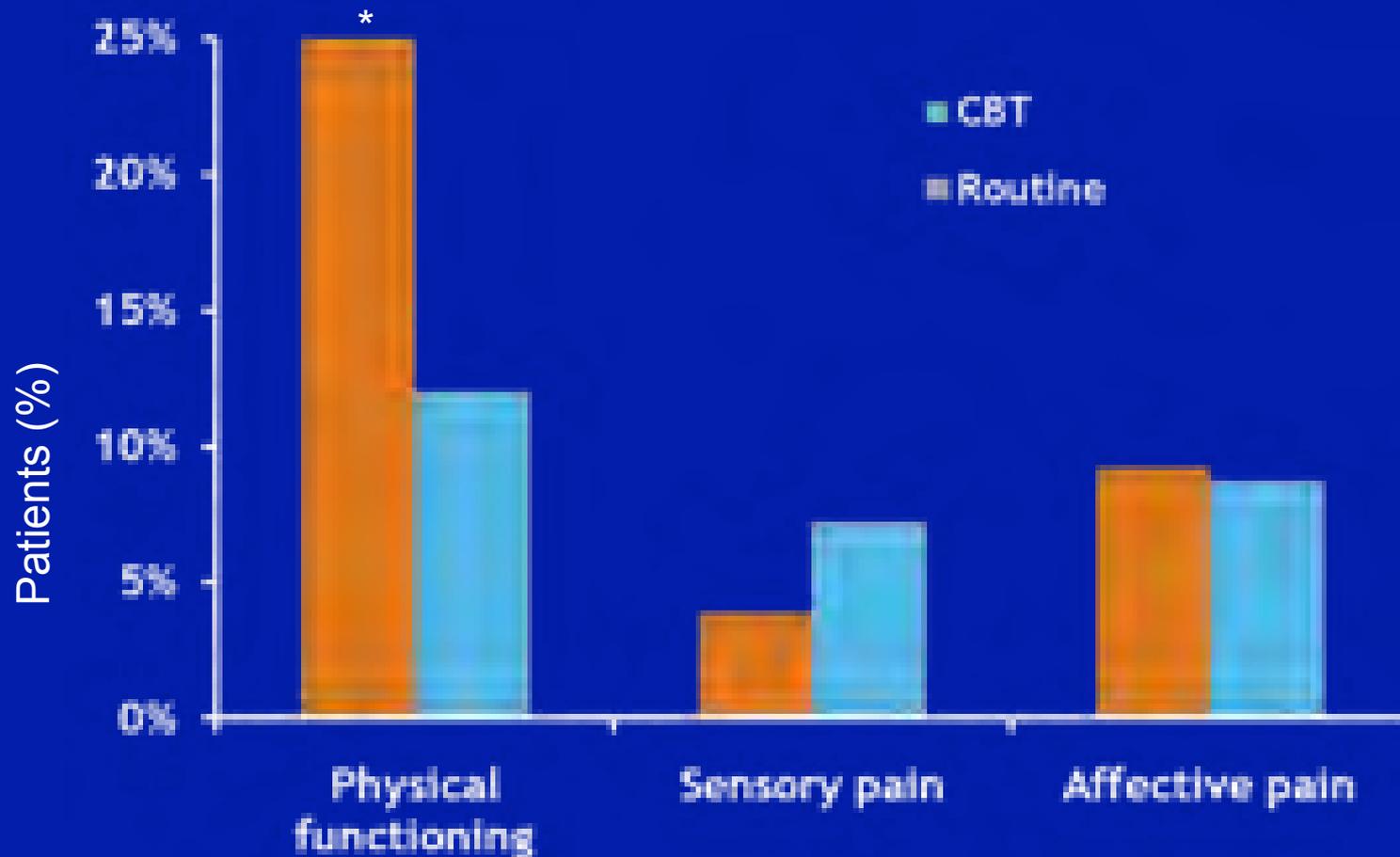


ACSM=American College of Sports Medicine; HR=heart rate.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- A program designed to teach patients techniques to reduce their symptoms, to increase coping strategies, and to identify and eliminate maladaptive illness behaviors
- Shown to be effective for nearly any chronic medical illness
- Not all CBT is created equally; very dependent on content, therapist and program

Improvements Noted in CBT vs Standard Care Over 12 Months (n=122)



*Clinically significant. OR 2.9, $P < .05$.

Recommended Approach

- Education
- Identify and treat “peripheral” pain generators
- For patients who need or want medications, start with low doses of mixed tricyclic antidepressants (amitriptyline, cyclobenzaprine); start low, go slow
- If patient has depression, memory problems, fatigue as most prominent symptoms
 - Add mixed reuptake inhibitor (eg, duloxetine, milnacipran, venlafaxine)
or SSRI (may need high doses)
- If patient has sleep disturbance as most prominent symptom
 - Use pregabalin or gabapentin first, give higher % of dose at night

Recommended Approach - II

- If no response, consider use of dopamine agonist, sodium oxybate
- For additional analgesic effect, add tramadol, tizanidine, opioids
- For sleep, if patient doesn't tolerate TCA, use zolpidem, zaleplon, trazodone
- Aggressively introduce non-pharmacological therapies

Conclusions

- Fibromyalgia has strong neurobiological underpinnings
- This is a polygenic disorder characterized by pain and sensory amplification
- There is evidence of increased levels of pro-nociceptive neurotransmitters (e.g. Substance P, glutamate) and decreased levels of anti-nociceptive neurotransmitters (e.g. serotonin, norepinephrine)
- The condition can be easily diagnosed in clinical practice based primarily on the patient history

Additional Source Information

for more information see: <http://open.umich.edu/wiki/CitationPolicy>

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