

EFFECTIVE FIBROMYALGIA TREATMENT WITH WHOLE BODY VIBRATION



News - Fibromyalgia News

Written by [Matthew Hogg](#)

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A program of whole-body vibration alongside a traditional exercise regime has been found to be more effective than the exercise regime alone in the treatment of fibromyalgia.

Whole-body vibration (WBV) involves standing on a machine with a flat plate which tilts slightly around an axle and sends vibrations through the entire body. The aim for the person standing on the machine is to keep the head and body steady and upright. In this way the person exercises all the muscles that keep the body in this position. The amount of time spent on the machine varies but even short sessions of only a few minutes are said to be of benefit.

In a study conducted by researchers at the University of Barcelona, Spain, women with fibromyalgia were split into three groups. For six weeks, one group undertook a traditional exercise regime involving aerobic activities, [stretching](#), and relaxation techniques, another undertook the same regime but also had WBV sessions, while the final group did neither.

To determine how the health of each participant had changed over the study period the researchers used questionnaires (the [Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire \(FIQ\)](#)) and other self-rating tools both before and after the six weeks of therapy.

They found that the women in the WBV group experienced significant improvements in both pain and fatigue during the study. The exercise regime alone did not produce any benefit and the women who received no treatment saw no improvements.

Although the study was small, involving only 36 participants and could not be blinded, the use of control groups to compare the WBV [therapy](#) lends credibility to the results.

The results are published in the *Journal of Alternative and [Complementary Medicine](#)*.

Although many people may not have heard of whole-body vibration before this is not the first study to look at the effects of its use as a therapy in various patient populations. Bandolier, an online publication of Oxford University, England, assessed studies of WBV.

They found six other studies that had looked at the therapy. The positive findings of these studies included [pain relief](#) for lower back pain, benefits in balance, functioning, and quality of life in older women, and improved muscle strength and [bone density](#) in postmenopausal women. There were no significant side-effects in any of the studies.

They conclude that although the size and quality of the studies was not optimal, WBV showed potential as a therapy for improving balance and muscle functioning which is particularly important for older people.

WBV machines are widely available for purchase by the public from online retailers.