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Foreword

Novel insights into the pathophysiology and treatment of fibromyalgia

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Pain is a main symptom in the musculoskeletal system as a reaction to that something is not right. Pain may become chronic and widespread, when neglected and untreated. In industrialized countries it is shown that 40–50% of the population have pain symptoms within a 2-week period, and 20% report this problem as serious. Compared with other disease groups, the musculoskeletal diseases are the main reason for premature pensions, cause most cases of long-standing illness, are the main reason for limitation of activity in the general population, cause the highest number of lost good years of life, as well as the highest number of visits to general practitioners (GPs). Fibromyalgia accounts for an important subgroup of these patients.

Fibromyalgia has now a distinctive well-defined clinical appearance, and an increasing interest in research into the disease has given important scientific results. The WHO has taken the consequence of this and has incorporated fibromyalgia in the tenth revision of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). This ought to give a better understanding and call for more empathy from healthcare professionals, which may diminish the feel of despair among the fibromyalgia patients.

It is under all circumstances necessary to diminish the cost of healthcare of fibromyalgia by slowing the steeply rising utilization of both GP consultations and diagnostic tests [1]. Although fibromyalgia is a chronic disease, new treatments have shown some effects on pain in fibromyalgia.

This book focuses on new knowledge in pain mechanisms, fatigue and pain assessments. Also the influence of genetics on fibromyalgia, possible biomarkers, and measurements of muscle strength and function of daily activities based on newly developed methods are described. Last, but not least, important treatment options are described. Fibromyalgia patients show as a group a marked heterogeneity, and different groups of patients benefit from different therapies. Hopefully a tailor-made personalized treatment will soon be an option. A treatment as early as possible is important. Improving the condition of fibromyalgia is a great challenge.

We hope that this book will be a useful handbook for healthcare professionals at all levels dealing with fibromyalgia patients, and that a better understanding of the disease will help fibromyalgia patients to achieve a better life and health.

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Reference

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