



How does chronic psychosocial distress induce pain? Focus on neuroinflammation and neuroplasticity changes

Barbara Fülöp^{a,b,*}, Éva Borbély^{a,b}, Zsuzsanna Helyes^{a,b,c}

^a Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, University of Pécs, Medical School, Centre for Neuroscience, Pécs, Hungary

^b HUN-REN-PTE Chronic Pain Research Group, Pécs, Hungary

^c National Laboratory for Drug Research and Development, Magyar Tudósok Krt. 2. H-1117, Budapest, Hungary

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Chronic pain
Chronic primary pain
Chronic stress
Fibromyalgia
Unmet medical need
Neuroinflammation
Neuronal plasticity
Mood disorders

ABSTRACT

Chronic primary pain including fibromyalgia for the musculoskeletal system persists for more than 3 months. Its etiological factors and the pathophysiological mechanisms are not known, and therefore, there is no satisfactory therapy, it is an unmet medical need condition. The only etiological and aggravating factor is chronic psychosocial distress, which is known to cause neuroimmune and endocrine changes both in the periphery and the central nervous system. In this short review, we introduce our research perspective by summarizing the recent literature on the interactions between chronic pain, stress, and commonly co-morbid mood disorders. Immune activation, autoimmunity, neuro-immune-vascular crosstalks and neuroinflammation play roles in the pathophysiology of these conditions. Data on stress-induced neuroplasticity changes at cellular and molecular levels were also collected in relation to chronic primary pain both from clinical studies and animal experiments of translational relevance. Understanding these mechanisms could help to identify novel therapeutic targets for chronic primary pain including fibromyalgia.

1. Chronic primary pain as an unmet medical need condition, focus on fibromyalgia (FM)

According to the latest definition of the International Association for the Study of Pain chronic primary pain (CPP) is defined as pain lasting for more than 3 months without any specific underlying cause (Nicholas et al., 2019). It has substantial negative impact not only on the patients' quality of life and working abilities, but also on the healthcare system and the society (D'Onghia et al., 2022). Chronic psychosocial distress is known to be the only etiological and/or aggravating factor of these conditions (Barke, 2019; Nicholas et al., 2019; Scholz et al., 2019). Fibromyalgia (FM) and complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) represent two out of the five main CPP categories. FM is a chronic widespread musculoskeletal pain without any known underlying background damage condition (Buskila and Sarzi-Puttini, 2006; Harden et al., 2010), with an incidence of 7–12 per 1000 per year (Creed, 2020; Weir et al., 2006). CRPS develops after a minor tissue trauma on the affected limb with excessive swelling and, with an incidence of 5–26 per 100,000 per year (de Mos et al., 2007; Ott and Maihöfner, 2018). These conditions share several common features as chronic primary pain syndromes; such

as the lack of definitive etiology and pathophysiology, involvement of chronic psychosocial distress, potential autoimmunity, common mood disorders and psychological co-morbidities. However, they have many distinct characteristics regarding the localisation of the pain and concomitant autonomic nervous system disorders. In CRPS, a minor injury always precedes the condition, however, the extent of the chronic pain in the injured limb is disproportional to the original trauma. In contrast, FM develops without tissue damage, muscular tender points are specific, but there are no demonstratable lesions. Depression and anxiety are common comorbidities in FM patients, which suggests several common pathophysiological mechanisms and interactions between the pain and mood regulation pathways.

This review focuses on FM, which is the most common musculoskeletal chronic primary pain condition with no identified causative factors besides psychosocial distress and abnormal stress-coping capacities. This is still an under-diagnosed and often misunderstood disease, in which not only the diagnosis, but also the therapy is greatly challenging. The classical analgesic drugs such as non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs and opioids are not or only minimally effective in FM conditions. The first line therapy are the adjuvant analgesics including

This article is part of a special issue entitled: Future of PNI 2nd edition published in Brain, Behavior, & Immunity - Health.

* Corresponding author. Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, University of Pécs, Medical School, Centre for Neuroscience, Pécs, Hungary

E-mail address: PIBUAAO.PTE@pte.hu (B. Fülöp).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbih.2025.100964>

Received 30 November 2023; Received in revised form 30 January 2025; Accepted 10 February 2025

Available online 10 February 2025

2666-3546/© 2025 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Inc. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Table 1
Chronic stress-induced behavioral and molecular alterations in animal models of stress-induced pain, related to fibromyalgia.

| Rodent Model (rat and mice) | | Pain and mood | Neuroinflammation and inflammatory mechanisms |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| Models using stress paradigms | Repeated swim stress | Mechanical and thermal hypersensitivity (Quintero et al., 2000) Anxiety-like behavior EPM (Nazeri et al., 2018) | ↑ CR3 microglia activation in dorsal horn of lumbar spinal cord (Quintero et al., 2003) ↑ IL-1 concentration in spinal tissue (Suarez-Roca et al., 2014) |
| | Intermittent cold stress | Mechanical and thermal hypersensitivity (Nishiyori and Ueda, 2008) Anxiety and depression-like behavior FST (Hata, Hata' Eiji et al., 1995), EPM (Montserrat-De La Paz et al., 2013) | ↑ Iba1 positive cells in hippocampus (Qu et al., 2017) No IL-1 and TNF α elevation in hypothalamus and prefrontal cortex (Girotti et al., 2011), but IL-1 elevation in the plasma (Liao and Lin, 2021) |
| | Repeated sound stress | Mechanical and thermal hypersensitivity (Khasar et al., 2005) Anxiety-like behavior OFT (Green et al., 2011), EPM (Hung et al., 2020) | IL-6 but not TNF α elevation in plasma levels in early life sound stress protocol (Alvarez et al., 2013) |
| | Chronic restraint stress | Mechanical and thermal hypersensitivity (Gamaro et al., 1998) Anxiety and depression-like behavior FST (Platt et al., 1982) TST (Yin et al., 2020), OFT (Liang et al., 2015), EPM (Jeong et al., 2013), | ↑ GFAP and Iba1 immunoreactivity in the hippocampus and cerebral cortex (Fülöp et al., 2023) ↑ IL-1 in hippocampus (Guo et al., 2014) |
| Models without stress application | Reserpine-induced | Mechanical and thermal hypersensitivity (Nagakura et al., 2009) and spontaneous pain (Nagakura et al., 2019) Anxiety and depression-like behavior FST (Hubner de Souza et al., 2014), TST (Yao et al., 2020), OFT (Brusco et al., 2019), EPM (Kaur et al., 2019) | ↑ GFAP fluorescence intensity in the lumbar spinal cord. (De La Luz-Cuellar et al., 2019) ↑ Iba1 immunoreactivity activation in the spinal dorsal horn (Taguchi et al., 2015) ↑ glia produced mediators: IL-1, TNF α in cerebral cortex region and in the hippocampus (Arora and Chopra, 2013; Xu et al., 2013) |
| | Acid saline-induced | Mechanical hypersensitivity (Sluka et al., 2001) Anxiety and depression-like behavior FST, OFT (Lottering and Lin, 2021) | ↑ GFAP expression in hippocampus (Abd-Ellatif et al., 2018; Lambert et al., 2000) ↑ IL-1 and TNF α in hippocampus (Abd-Ellatif et al., 2018) |

GFAP = Glial fibrillary acidic protein; Iba1 = Ionized calcium binding adaptor molecule 1; FST=Forced swim test; TST = Tail suspension test; OFT=Open field test; EPM = Elevated plus maze test; IL= Interleukin; TNF α = Tumor necrosis factor alpha

antidepressants (e.g. amitriptyline, nortriptyline, duloxetine, venlafaxine) and antiepileptics (e.g. gabapentin, pregabalin), but they also have only minor effect in a subset of patients (Bellato et al., 2012; Macfarlane et al., 2017). Furthermore, psychotherapy might be effective on a long-term after months, but these treatments usually start together with medications at the earlier stages; further suggesting the complex treatment paradigm: targeting the psychosocial component of these diseases (Gomez-De-Regil and Estrella-Castillo, 2020). Therefore, there is a great need to understand the complex molecular mechanisms and pathways to identify novel, instant and fast acting pain-relievers and specific therapeutic options.

2. Chronic psychosocial distress as an etiological and aggravating factor of chronic primary pain: stress-pain interactions in FM

2.1. Clinical data

Positive correlations were found between the baseline stress levels and pain intensity scores in FM and other chronic widespread pain conditions in a longitudinal long-term clinical study (Bergenheim et al., 2019). Furthermore, both stress and pain catastrophizing showed strong positive correlations with pain severity and the co-occurrence of multiple painful diseases (Fillingim et al., 2020). Different psychosocial stressors influence the pathogenesis of low back pain, another chronic primary pain. The inflammatory cytokine interleukin-6 (IL-6), the sympathetic mediator norepinephrine, and resting heart rate were suggested to have predictive values in this condition (Wippert et al., 2022). The impact of chronic pain on stress levels, anxiety, and depression is confirmed, and the psychopathological profile, stress, and differences in coping mechanisms are associated with FM symptoms and pain threshold decrease (Weber et al., 2022). Psychotherapeutic tools like mindfulness in combination with exercise to reduce stress level was also effective for chronic pain (Deegan et al., 2023).

Trier Social Stress Test - a standardized and reliable acute psychosocial stress task that decreases both thermo- and mechanonociceptive

thresholds resulting in hyperalgesia (increased pain sensitivity) and allodynia (pain induced by a non-painful stimulus, such as touch or stroke) in FM patients (Crettaz et al., 2013).

Besides the clinical, psychological and neuroimaging (e.g. fMRI) outcomes, postmortem brain tissue examination with high-resolution microscopic techniques and omics (transcriptomic, metabolomic, proteomic) analysis could provide information about the molecular mechanisms of the disease. Nevertheless, these approaches are not applicable in FM patients, since it is not a lethal disease and postmortem samples are not available without other serious concomitant diseases. Therefore, it is inevitable to perform extensive research on brain samples obtained from translationally relevant animal models.

2.2. Preclinical models to investigate chronic primary pain: stress-related pain mechanisms

Although no animal models are suitable for reflecting all aspects of the complex symptomatology of human diseases, they can provide a good basis for understanding the cellular and molecular pathophysiological processes.

Several FM rodent models including chronic stress as an etiological factor are currently used in the literature which mimics different aspects of the disease (Table 1.). To draw strong conclusions, more of these models are suggested to be parallelly investigated and validated by functional techniques (e.g. behavioral outcomes for pain, anxiety and depression), morphological and imaging methods (e.g. microscopy, fMRI), and pharmacological tools using drugs currently registered for FM therapy (e.g. antidepressants, opioids).

Different types of chronic stress paradigms, such as repeated swim stress (Quintero et al., 2000), intermittent cold stress (Nishiyori and Ueda, 2008), sound stress of four different frequencies combined with bradykinin hind paw injection (Khasar et al., 2005) as well as chronic immobilization stress induce both mechanical and thermal hyper-nociception similar to the FM patients (Da Silva Torres et al., 2003; Gamaro et al., 1998; Scheich et al., 2017). However, literature data suggests that not all stress types can mimic the basic symptoms of

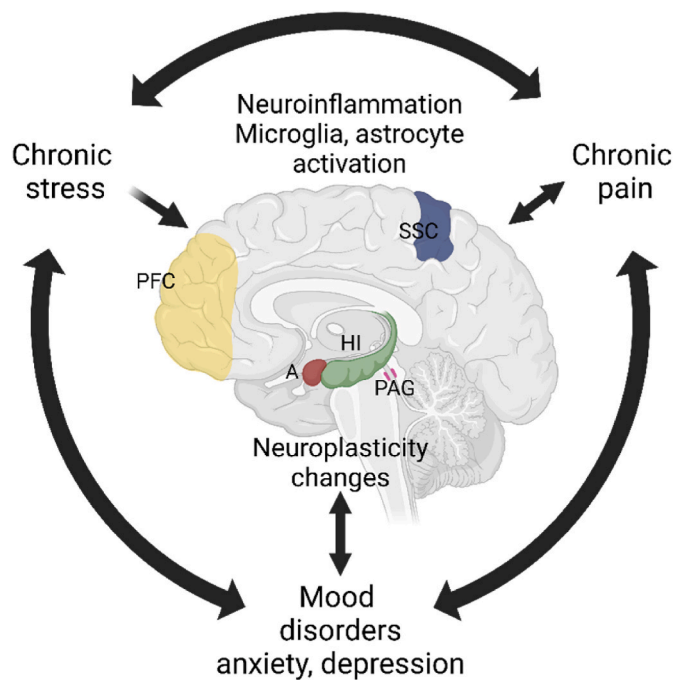


Fig. 1. Interactions of chronic pain, mood disorders and stress: chronic psychosocial distress induces neuroinflammation and neuroplasticity changes in brain areas involved also in pain processing, e.g. the prefrontal cortex (PFC), amygdala (A), hippocampus (HI), periaqueductal gray (PAG) and somatosensory cortex (SSC). Created with [BioRender.com](#).

FM. Although chronic variable mild stress is an appropriate depression model, it is not suitable to investigate stress-induced pain mechanisms (Liu et al., 2018; Shi et al., 2010).

Systemic reserpine injection depleting monoamines mimics spontaneous pain, thermal and mechanical hyperalgesia (Nagakura et al., 2009). Meanwhile, acid saline (pH 4 hydroxyethyl-piperazineethane-sulfonic acid buffered saline) injection into the gastrocnemius muscle results in mechanical hypersensitivity, but the development of thermal sensitivity is debated (Sluka et al., 2001).

The characteristics of rodent FM models are summarized in [Table 1](#).

3. Mood disorders as common comorbidities of chronic pain

Chronic pain patients often suffer from comorbidities of mental illnesses, such as depression and anxiety disorders (Dahan et al., 2014; McWilliams et al., 2003). Chronic psychosocial distress particularly in vulnerable patients with inappropriate coping abilities and resilience, induces rumination, consequent anxiety, mood negativities and depression (Bø et al., 2023; Bylsma et al., 2008; Richter-Levin and Xu, 2018). Higher percentage of mood disorders are present in FM patients compared to the healthy population (Galvez-Sánchez et al., 2019; Henaio-Pérez et al., 2022; Wan et al., 2019). Depression as a comorbidity is also suspected to worsen the treatment outcomes in FM patients (Munipalli et al., 2022). In women, pain severity and catastrophizing were associated with both higher depression and anxiety levels (Hadlandsmayth et al., 2020). Personality traits such as neuroticism, conscientiousness and extraversion are associated with FM symptoms including pain, depression, anxiety and stress level (Seto et al., 2019). As a stress management method, cognitive behavior therapy significantly improved coping and self-reported depression ratings in FM (Karlsson et al., 2023).

Stress has a huge negative impact on patients' mental health and illness course, which often leads to depression. Similarly, in mice, chronic unpredictable stress results in anxiety and depression-like

behaviors combined with severe cognitive impairment (Liu et al., 2020). Social defeat stress and subthreshold social defeat paradigm also induces depression-like behavior in mice accompanied by long-lasting hyperalgesia further suggesting interactions between mood disorders and pain (Pagliusi et al., 2020; Piardi et al., 2020).

In different rodent FM models, such as reserpine-, direct muscle harm- and stress-induced paradigms anxiety and depression-like behavior were also observed (Blasco-Serra et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2014; Scheich et al., 2017) which correlated with the extent of hyperalgesia (Zhao et al., 2022).

Both chronic pain and depression have been suggested to induce neuroinflammation via glia-neuron interactions and neuroplasticity alterations by remodeling of the neural networks in the affected brain regions, making the treatment more difficult (Lithwick et al., 2013).

4. Neuroinflammation and neuroplasticity changes as common mechanisms of chronic primary pain: interaction of pain, mood and stress pathways

Neuroinflammation is defined as the activation of the innate immune system of the central nervous system (CNS) in response to noxious stimuli like trauma, infarction, infection, or even chronic stress. It is characterized by cellular (glia cells and neurons) and molecular changes (cytokines, chemokines, neuropeptides, neurotransmitters). Microglia and astrocytes also contribute to the regenerative and/or apoptotic processes (Calcia et al., 2016; DiSabato et al., 2016; Patani et al., 2023). (Fig. 1.)

4.1. Clinical data

One of the milestone clinical findings for neuroinflammation playing a role in FM was the increased uptake of the radioligand tracer [^{11}C] PBR28 in the prefrontal cortex of these patients positively correlated with their fatigue symptoms. The radioligand is a positron emission tomography (PET) radiotracer binding to a 18p kD translocator protein (TSPO), which is expressed in activated microglia, reactive astrocytes, vascular endothelium, and to a much lower degree in neurons (Albrecht et al., 2019). Choline levels linked to glial activation were also elevated in FM patients in several brain areas assessed by functional magnetic imaging (fMRI), which showed positive correlation with the pain parameters (Jung et al., 2020). Functional connectivity within the salience network involved in the coordination of external and internal stimuli increased in participants exposed to chronic psychosocial stressors compared to unexposed ones. These cortico-striatal connectivity alterations and signal processing abnormalities suggest neuroplasticity changes due to the reorganization of neural networks and synaptic links (McCutcheon et al., 2019). Similarly, increased salience network connectivity was observed in post-traumatic stress disorder patients, which normalized after evidence-based psychotherapy (Abdallah et al., 2019). Maladaptive tuning of several brain functions, more specifically prefrontal processes are suggested to be involved in pain catastrophizing in FM patients (Hubbard et al., 2020; Sandström et al., 2020, 2022). Catastrophizing and ruminations are long known to be involved in the maintenance and aggravation of chronic pain (Gracely et al., 2004) positively correlating with pain intensity in different body regions of FM patients (Ellingsen et al., 2021). Besides the salience network enhanced connectivity was observed in FM patients also in the default mode network representing different brain areas simultaneously activated in response to diverse experimental tasks (Galambos et al., 2019) positive correlating with the pain intensity (Čeko et al., 2020). A recent meta-analysis (Wang et al., 2022) demonstrated gray matter abnormalities in chronic primary pain patients. Neuroinflammation was detected with [^{11}C]-(R)-PK11195, a translocator protein expressed by activated microglia or astrocytes in positron emission tomography, in different brain areas of fibromyalgia and CRPS patients. Distribution volume ratio correlated with stress and anxiety levels which supports

the hypothesis that neuroinflammation is the link between mood disorders and pain (Gritti et al., 2021; Jeon et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2021).

4.2. Preclinical results

Chronic stress-induced microglia and astrocyte activation were demonstrated in animal experiments more than 2 decades ago (O'Connor et al., 2003). Chronic stress paradigms in rats activated microglia shown by increased density of ionized calcium-binding adapter molecule 1 (Iba1) immunoreactivity in the medial prefrontal cortex (Hinwood et al., 2012; Kopp et al., 2013). Several neuro-inflammatory parameters were increased in FM models as summarized in Table 1 Pointing out the translational relevance of the models to investigate this pathophysiological component of FM.

In the medial amygdala, loss of neural dendritic spines was shown in mice in response to chronic restraint stress (Bennur et al., 2007) Brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) is suggested to be involved in the remodeling and neuroplasticity changes of affected brain areas in mice caused by chronic stress (Amosova et al., 2011; Govindarajan et al., 2006). Deteriorated salience network connectivity was also observed in animal models of chronic stress (Dai et al., 2023; Seewoo et al., 2020). In the acid saline FM mouse model, the default mode network-periaqueductal gray matter functional connectivity showed the strongest positive correlation with the pain threshold decrease (Nasseef et al., 2021). In the reserpine-induced rat FM model moderate electrical forepaw stimulation induced significantly higher activation of the default mode network compared to controls (Wells et al., 2017).

These clinical and pre-clinical results described above may provide a good basis for a more precise understanding of the pathophysiological mechanisms behind stress-induced pain, thus opening novel drug development perspectives in FM. Immunological factors and neuro-inflammatory mechanisms are suggested to be involved in FM. In this chapter, we summarized the key mediators, which could serve as potential pharmacological targets.

5. Potential mechanisms and novel therapeutic targets of FM and stress-induced pain

5.1. Autoimmunity, autoantibodies

Autoimmunity has been implicated in chronic primary pain syndromes as a potential pathogenic factor. Systemic injection of purified serum immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibodies of FM patients were shown to bind to the satellite glia cells in the DRGs and induce severe symptoms including hyperalgesia in a mouse model (Krock et al., 2023).

Furthermore, FM symptoms such as mechanical hyperalgesia, reduced grip strength and locomotor activity, increased nociceptor excitability were also mimicked in mice by the passive transfer of FM patients' IgG (Goebel et al., 2021). In this model glial fibrillary acidic protein (GFAP) expression increased in the lumbar DRGs at the level of the primary sensory neuronal cells, but not in the spinal dorsal horn at the level of secondary sensory neurons.

5.2. Nerve growth factor (NGF) and brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF)

NGF and BDNF are involved in pain sensitization and hyperalgesia (Sluka and Clauw, 2016). These mediators have recently been investigated in FM, and the results suggested their potential predictive values for pain. FM patients had lower levels of circulating NGF and IL-1 β , while BDNF and IL-8 levels were higher than healthy controls. However, no correlation was found between these biomarkers and cytokines with the patients' depressive and anxiety symptoms, pain-catastrophizing, and pain levels (Jablochikova et al., 2019).

In rats, neuroinflammation with Nod-like receptor protein 3 (NLRP3) inflammasome activation in the hippocampus and basolateral amygdala

was present in rats in response to CRS (Feng et al., 2019) accompanied by increased expression of the chronic neuronal activation marker c-fos and IL-1 β (Yu et al., 2021). Reducing hippocampal CRS-induced proBDNF upregulation resulted in reduced anxiety- and depression-like behaviors in rats (Zhong et al., 2019). CVMS-induced thermal hyperalgesia could be prevented by blocking BDNF signaling (Liu et al., 2018).

5.3. Inflammatory cytokines, chemokines and neuropeptides

The role of inflammatory cytokines are widely investigated in fatigue, pain and psychological disturbances as well (Dantzer and Kelley, 2007). Psychological distress, pain intensity and sensitivity in FM patients showed positive correlations with specific plasma proteins involved in inflammation and immunity (e.g. IL-6, IL-2, haptoglobin) (Wählén et al., 2020). Inflammatory response proteins were detected in FM patients' cerebrospinal fluid by proteomic analysis suggesting inflammatory and neuroendocrine disturbances (Khoonsari et al., 2019). Female FM patients' isolated monocytes secreted higher levels of IL-1, IL-5, IL-6 and IL-10 compared to healthy controls. Concentrations of IL-4, IL-5 and the anti-inflammatory cytokine IL-10 showed positive correlations with the pain intensity and related mood disturbances (Merriwether et al., 2021).

The importance of several neuropeptides released from capsaicin-sensitive peptidergic nociceptive fibers has been suggested in chronic pain conditions. Increased levels of tachykinins like substance P and hemokinin-1 (HK-1) were detected in the serum of FM patients compared to controls, which decreased by cognitive behavior therapy (Karlsson et al., 2019; Tsiloni et al., 2016).

Preclinical data demonstrated the important regulatory roles of several neuropeptides released from neurons, glia or mast cells such as neuropeptide Y, pituitary adenylate cyclase-activating peptide, somatostatin and tachykinins, substance P, neurokinin A and B and HK-1 in neuroinflammatory processes (Carniglia et al., 2017; Suto et al., 2014; Theoharides et al., 2019). HK-1 deficiency prevented CRS-induced hyperalgesia in both male and female mice (Borbély et al., 2023).

A recent publication from our laboratory as a part of the PhD project of B. Fülöp showed that CRS-induced hyperalgesia and related neuroinflammation demonstrated by both astroglia and microglia activation in stress and pain-related brain regions do not develop in mice lacking IL-1. This suggests the importance of this cytokine in this pain sensitization mechanism (Fülöp et al., 2023). An important pathway of neuroinflammation is mediated by fractalkine, which predominantly acts at microglial cells in the CNS. Fractalkine receptor 1 (CX3CR1) deficient mice are resistant to chronic unpredictable mild stress-induced depression-like behavior, cognitive impairment and neuroinflammation. Stress-induced elevation of IL-1 in both brain homogenates and plasma samples were not present in CX3CR1 deleted mice, suggesting IL-1 release from microglia in response to fractalkine receptor activation upon chronic stress (Liu et al., 2020).

6. Conclusions and future perspectives

Chronic psychosocial distress is an important etiological and aggravating factor of chronic primary pain conditions such as FM, and pain further triggers stress, anxiety and depression forming a vicious circle. Stress and pain pathways share several structures in the brain, as well as a range of common mechanisms and mediators. Both have been suggested to induce neuroinflammation via glia-neuron interactions and neuroplasticity alterations by remodeling of the neural networks in the affected brain regions, making the treatment more difficult (Lithwick et al., 2013). A better understanding of the complex interactions between psychosocial distress, pain and inflammation/immunity is crucial to identify preventive and early therapeutic strategies. There has not been original innovative drug development for chronic pain in the last decades as demonstrated by the clinical trial databases, therefore it



Fig. 2. Barbara started her research career as an undergraduate student researcher back in 2017 at the Institute of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy at the Medical University of Pécs, Hungary. Her interest focused on stress-induced pain syndromes in animal models. After obtaining her medical degree, she started her Ph.D. studies under the supervision of brilliant researchers of the pain field: Dr. Éva Borbély and Professor Zsuzsanna Helyes (co-authors of this article). After a maternity leave, she continued her studies in the basic research field of chronic stress and pain interactions. Being involved in vivo mouse studies, behavioral testing, and pain measurements as well. She is also performing in vitro immunohistochemical measurements with a focus on neuroinflammation. Currently, she is preparing her Ph.D. thesis about the molecular processes involved in chronic stress in mouse models of pain. For her research work, she received several awards including the Pro Scientia Gold Medal (2019) and the Hungarian New National Excellence Program Scholarship (2019, 2021, 2023, 2024). Besides her family and her 3 kids, her biggest love is her research topic. She hopes that her experimental results can contribute to a more precise treatment of chronic, difficult-to-treat pain conditions in the (not-so-distant) future. (For interpretation of the references to colour in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

represents a real unmet medical need.

In agreement with the latest literature data, we conclude that targeting neuroinflammation is a promising novel direction for the treatment of chronic primary pain including FM. Besides extensive human studies, animal models with translational relevance are crucial to determine the key mediators and targets of the neural and immune systems for drug development.

Barbara Fülöp (Fig. 2.) has worked on integrative preclinical investigation of the mechanisms involved in chronic pain conditions related to psychosocial stress. Her focus is on neuroinflammation, glia-neuron interactions and neuroplasticity using mouse models with complex behavioral, molecular biological, biochemical and neuroimaging outcomes. As a neuropharmacology PhD candidate, her deepest belief is that it is crucial to have a holistic approach to identify novel therapeutic targets for these common co-morbidities. In her opinion, preclinical results can substantially promote these efforts.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Barbara Fülöp: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Investigation, Conceptualization. **Éva Borbély:** Writing – review & editing. **Zsuzsanna Helyes:** Writing – review & editing, Conceptualization.

Funding

This research was funded by research grants No. TKP2021-EGA-13 and TKP2021-EGA-16, grants which have been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the EGA 13 and EGA 16 funding scheme co-financed by the EU. Supported by the ÚNKP-23-3 New National Excellence Program of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology from the source of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund. Project no. RRF-2.3.1-21-2022-00015 has been implemented with the support provided by the European Union. National Brain Research Program 3.0 (NAP 3.0). Zs. H and É.B. were supported by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH K 138046 and NKFIH FK 137951). B. F. was supported by EKÖP-24-3-II. Hungarian Research Network (HUN-REN), Chronic Pain Research Group, and by The National Research, Development and Innovation Office (Phar-maLab).

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgment

The authors are grateful to Lina Hudhud and Noémi Bencze for the technical help in creating figures.

Abbreviations:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| BDNF | brain-derived neurotrophic factor |
| CNS | central nervous system |
| CPP | chronic primary pain |
| CRS | chronic restraint stress |
| CRPS | complex regional pain syndrome |
| EPM | elevated plus maze test |
| FM | fibromyalgia |
| FST | forced swim test |
| CX3CR1 | Fractalkine receptor |
| fMRI | functional magnetic resonance imaging |
| GFAP | glial fibrillary acidic protein |
| HK-1 | hemokinin-1 |
| IgG | immunoglobulin G |
| IL | interleukin |
| Iba1 | ionized calcium-binding adapter molecule 1 |
| NGF | nerve growth factor |
| NLRP3 | -like receptor protein 3 |
| OFT | field test |
| PET | positron emission tomography |
| TST | tail suspension test |
| TNF α | tumor necrosis factor alpha |

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

References

- Abd-Ellatif, R.B., Mohamed, H.K., Kotb, H.I., 2018. Reactive astrogliosis in an experimental model of fibromyalgia: effect of dexmedetomidine. *Cells. Tissues. Organ* 205, 105–119. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000488757>.
- Abdallah, C.G., Averill, C.L., Ramage, A.E., Averill, L.A., Alkin, E., Nemati, S., Krystal, J. H., Roache, J.D., Resick, P.A., Young-McCaughan, S., Peterson, A.L., Fox, P., Borah, E.V., Dondanville, K.A., Kok, M., Litz, B., Mintz, J., Robinson, P.C., Woolsey, M., Yarris, J., 2019. Reduced salience and enhanced central executive connectivity following PTSD treatment. *Chronic Stress (Thousand Oaks, Calif.)* 3. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2470547019838971>.
- Albrecht, D.S., Forsberg, A., Sandström, A., Bergan, C., Kadetoff, D., Protsenko, E., Lampa, J., Lee, Y.C., Höglund, C.O., Catana, C., Cervenka, S., Akeju, O., Lekander, M., Cohen, G., Hallidin, C., Taylor, N., Kim, M., Hooker, J.M., Edwards, R. R., Napadow, V., Kosek, E., Loggia, M.L., 2019. Brain glial activation in fibromyalgia - a multi-site positron emission tomography investigation. *Brain Behav. Immun.* 75, 72–83. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbi.2018.09.018>.
- Alvarez, P., Green, P.G., Levine, J.D., 2013. Stress in the adult rat exacerbates muscle pain induced by early-life stress. *Biol. Psychiatry* 74, 688–695. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsych.2013.04.006>.
- Ammosova, T., Obukhov, Y., Kotelkin, A., Breuer, D., Beullens, M., Gordeuk, V.R., Bollen, M., Nekhai, S., 2011. Protein phosphatase-1 activates CDK9 by dephosphorylating Ser175. *PLoS One* 6. <https://doi.org/10.1371/JOURNAL.PONE.0018985>.
- Arora, V., Chopra, K., 2013. Possible involvement of oxido-nitrosative stress induced neuro-inflammatory cascade and monoaminergic pathway: underpinning the correlation between nociceptive and depressive behaviour in a rodent model. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2013.08.032>.
- Barke, A., 2019. Chronic Pain has arrived in the ICD-11. *ISAP - Int. Assoc. Study Pain*.
- Bellato, E., Marini, E., Castoldi, F., Barbasetti, N., Mattei, L., Bonasia, D.E., Blonna, D., 2012. Fibromyalgia syndrome: etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment. *Pain Res. Treat.* 17. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2012/426130>.
- Bennur, S., Shankaranarayana Rao, B.S., Pawlak, R., Strickland, S., McEwen, B.S., Chattarji, S., 2007. Stress-induced spine loss in the medial amygdala is mediated by tissue-plasminogen activator. *Neuroscience* 144, 8–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroscience.2006.08.075>.
- Bergenheim, A., Juhlin, S., Nordeman, L., Joelsson, M., Mannerkorpi, K., 2019. Stress levels predict substantial improvement in pain intensity after 10 to 12 years in women with fibromyalgia and chronic widespread pain: a cohort study. *BMC Rheumatol.* 3, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41927-019-0072-9/TABLES/4>.
- Blasco-Serra, A., Escrihuela-Vidal, F., González-Soler, E.M., Martínez-Expósito, F., Blasco-Ausina, M.C., Martínez-Bellver, S., Cervera-Ferri, A., Teruel-Martí, V., Valverde-Navarro, A.A., 2015. Depressive-like symptoms in a reserpine-induced model of fibromyalgia in rats. *Physiol. Behav.* 151, 456–462. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2015.07.033>.
- Bø, R., Kraft, B., Joormann, J., Jonassen, R., Harmer, C.J., Landrø, N.I., 2023. Cognitive predictors of stress-induced mood malleability in depression. *Anxiety Stress Coping*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2023.2255531>.
- Borbély, É., Kecskés, A., Kun, J., Kepe, E., Fülöp, B., Kovács-Rozmer, K., Scheich, B., Renner, É., Palkovits, M., Helyes, Z., 2023. Hemokinin-1 is a mediator of chronic restraint stress-induced pain. *Sci. Rep.* 13, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-46402-7>.
- Brusco, I., Justino, A.B., Silva, R., Fischer, S., Cunha, T.M., Scussell, R., Machado-De-Ávila, R.A., Ferreira, J., Oliveira, S.M., 2019. Kinins and their B 1 and B 2 receptors are involved in fibromyalgia-like pain symptoms in mice. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bcp.2019.06.023>.
- Buskila, D., Sarzi-Puttini, P., 2006. Biology and therapy of fibromyalgia. *Genetic aspects of fibromyalgia syndrome. Arthritis Res. Ther.* 8, 218. <https://doi.org/10.1186/ar2005>.
- Bylsma, L.M., Morris, B.H., Rottenberg, J., 2008. A meta-analysis of emotional reactivity in major depressive disorder. *Clin. Psychol. Rev.* 28, 676–691. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2007.10.001>.
- Calcina, M.A., Bonsall, D.R., Bloomfield, P.S., Selvaraj, S., Barichello, T., Howes, O.D., 2016. Stress and neuroinflammation: a systematic review of the effects of stress on microglia and the implications for mental illness. *Psychopharmacology (Berl.)* 233, 1637. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S00213-016-4218-9>.
- Carniglia, L., Ramírez, D., Durand, D., Saba, J., Turati, J., Caruso, C., Scimone, T.N., Lasaga, M., 2017. Neuropeptides and microglial activation in inflammation, pain, and neurodegenerative diseases. *Mediat. Inflamm.* <https://doi.org/10.1155/2017/5048616>.
- Čeko, M., Frangos, E., Gracely, J., Richards, E., Wang, B., Schweinhardt, P., Catherine Bushnell, M., 2020. Default mode network changes in fibromyalgia patients are largely dependent on current clinical pain. *Neuroimage* 216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2020.116877>.
- Creed, F., 2020. A review of the incidence and risk factors for fibromyalgia and chronic widespread pain in population-based studies. *Pain* 161, 1169–1176. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000001819>.
- Crettaz, B., Marziniak, M., Willeke, P., Young, P., Hellhammer, D., Stumpf, A., Burgmer, M., 2013. Stress-induced allodynia – evidence of increased pain sensitivity in healthy humans and patients with chronic pain after experimentally induced psychosocial stress. *PLoS One* 8, e69460. <https://doi.org/10.1371/JOURNAL.PONE.0069460>.
- D'Onghia, M., Ciaffi, J., Ruscitti, P., Cipriani, P., Giacomelli, R., Ablin, J.N., Ursini, F., 2022. The economic burden of fibromyalgia: a systematic literature review. *Semin. Arthritis Rheum.* 56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.semarthrit.2022.152060>.
- Da Silva Torres, I.L., Cucco, S.N.S., Bassani, M., Duarte, M.S., Silveira, P.P., Vasconcellos, A.P., Tabajara, A.S., Dantas, G., Fontella, F.U., Dalmaz, C., Ferreira, M. B.C., 2003. Long-lasting delayed hyperalgesia after chronic restraint stress in rats - effect of morphine administration. *Neurosci. Res.* 45, 277–283. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0168-0102\(02\)00232-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0168-0102(02)00232-8).
- Dahan, A., Van Velzen, M., Niesters, M., 2014. Comorbidities and the complexities of chronic pain. *Anesthesiology* 121, 675–677. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ALN.0000000000000402>.
- Dai, T., Seewoo, B.J., Hennessy, L.A., Bolland, S.J., Rosenow, T., Rodger, J., 2023. Identifying reproducible resting state networks and functional connectivity alterations following chronic restraint stress in anaesthetized rats. *Front. Neurosci.* 17, 1151525. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FNINS.2023.1151525/BIBTEX>.
- Dantzer, R., Kelley, K.W., 2007. Twenty years of research on cytokine-induced sickness behavior. *Brain Behav. Immun.* 21, 153–160. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbi.2006.09.006>.
- De La Luz-Cuellar, Y.E., Rodríguez-Palma, E.J., Franco-Enzástiga, Ú., Salinas-Abarca, A. B., Delgado-Lezama, R., Granados-Soto, V., 2019. Blockade of spinal α 5-GABA A receptors differentially reduces reserpine-induced fibromyalgia-type pain in female rats the role of spinal α 5 subunit-containing GABA A (α 5-GABA). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejphar.2019.172443>.
- de Mos, M., de Bruijn, A.G.J., Huygen, F.J.P.M., Dieleman, J.P., Stricker, B.H.C., Sturkenboom, M.C.J.M., 2007. The incidence of complex regional pain syndrome: a population-based study. *Pain* 129, 12–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pain.2006.09.008>.
- Deegan, O., Fullen, B.M., Casey, M.B., Segurado, R., Hearty, C., Doody, C., 2023. Mindfulness combined with exercise online (move) compared with a self-management guide for adults with chronic pain: a feasibility randomized controlled trial. *Clin. J. Pain* 39, 394–407. <https://doi.org/10.1097/AJP.0000000000001126>.
- DiSabato, D.J., Quan, N., Godbout, J.P., 2016. Neuroinflammation: the devil is in the details. *J. Neurochem.* 139. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jnc.13607>.
- Ellingsen, D.M., Beissner, F., Moher Alsayd, T., Lazaridou, A., Paschali, M., Berry, M., Isaro, L., Grahl, A., Lee, J., Wasan, A.D., Edwards, R.R., Napadow, V., 2021. A picture is worth a thousand words: linking fibromyalgia pain widespreadness from digital pain drawings with pain catastrophizing and brain cross-network connectivity. *Pain* 162, 1352–1363. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000002134>.
- Feng, X., Zhao, Y., Yang, T., Song, M., Wang, C., Yao, Y., Fan, H., 2019. Glucocorticoid-driven NLRP3 inflammasome activation in hippocampal microglia mediates chronic stress-induced depressive-like behaviors. *Front. Mol. Neurosci.* 12, 474666. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FNMOL.2019.00210/BIBTEX>.
- Fillingim, R., Ohrbach, R., Greenspan, J., Sanders, A., Rathnayaka, N., Maixner, W., Slade, G., 2020. Associations of psychologic factors with multiple chronic overlapping pain conditions. *J. oral facial pain headache* 34, s85–s100. <https://doi.org/10.11607/OFPH.2584>.
- Fülöp, B., Hunyady, Á., Bencze, N., Kormos, V., Szentes, N., Dénes, Á., Lénárt, N., Borbély, E., Helyes, Z., 2023. IL-1 mediates chronic stress-induced hyperalgesia accompanied by microglia and astroglia morphological changes in pain-related brain regions in mice. *Int. J. Mol. Sci.* 24, 5479. <https://doi.org/10.3390/IJMS24065479>.
- Galambos, A., Szabó, E., Nagy, Z., Édes, A.E., Kocsal, N., Juhász, G., Kőkőnyei, G., 2019. A systematic review of structural and functional MRI studies on pain catastrophizing. *J. Pain Res.* 12, 1155–1178. <https://doi.org/10.2147/JPR.S192246>.
- Galvez-Sánchez, C.M., Duschek, S., Del Paso, G.A.R., 2019. Psychological impact of fibromyalgia: current perspectives. *Psychol. Res. Behav. Manag.* 12, 117–127. <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S178240>.
- Gamaro, G.D., Xavier, M.H., Denardin, J.D., Pilger, J.A., Ely, D.R., Ferreira, M.B.C., Dalmaz, C., 1998. The effects of acute and repeated restraint stress on the nociceptive response in rats. *Physiol. Behav.* 63, 693–697. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0031-9384\(97\)00520-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0031-9384(97)00520-9).
- Girotti, M., Donegan, J.J., Morilak, D.A., 2011. Chronic intermittent cold stress sensitizes neuro-immune reactivity in the rat brain. *Psychoneuroendocrinology* 36, 1164. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2011.02.008>.
- Goebel, A., Krock, E., Gentry, C., Israel, M.R., Jurczak, A., Urbina, C.M., Sandor, K., Vastani, N., Maurer, M., Cuhadar, U., Sensi, S., Nomura, Y., Menezes, J., Baharpoor, A., Brieskorn, L., Sandström, A., Tour, J., Kadetoff, D., Haglund, L., Kosek, E., Bevan, S., Svensson, C.I., Andersson, D.A., 2021. Passive transfer of fibromyalgia symptoms from patients to mice. *J. Clin. Investig.* 131. <https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI144201>.
- Gomez-De-Regil, L., Estrella-Castillo, D.F., 2020. Psychotherapy for physical pain in patients with fibromyalgia: a systematic review. *Pain Res. Manag.* <https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/3408052>.
- Govindarajan, A., Shankaranarayana Rao, B.S., Nair, D., Trinh, M., Mawjee, N., Tonegawa, S., Chattarji, S., 2006. Transgenic brain-derived neurotrophic factor expression causes both anxiogenic and antidepressant effects. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A.* 103, 13208–13213. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0605180103>.
- Gracely, R.H., Geisser, M.E., Giesecke, T., Grant, M.A.B., Petzke, F., Williams, D.A., Clauw, D.J., 2004. Pain catastrophizing and neural responses to pain among persons with fibromyalgia. *Brain* 127, 835–843. <https://doi.org/10.1093/BRAIN/AWH098>.
- Green, P.G., Alvarez, P., Gear, R.W., Mendoza, D., Levine, J.D., 2011. Further validation of a model of fibromyalgia syndrome in the rat. *J. Pain* 12, 811–818. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpain.2011.01.006>.
- Gritti, D., Delvecchio, G., Ferro, A., Bressi, C., Brambilla, P., 2021. Neuroinflammation in major depressive disorder: a review of PET imaging studies examining the 18-kDa translocator protein. *J. Affect. Disord.* 292, 642–651. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2021.06.001>.
- Guo, T., Guo, Z., Yang, X., Sun, L., Wang, S., Yingge, A., He, X., Ya, T., 2014. The alterations of IL-1beta, IL-6, and TGF-beta levels in hippocampal CA3 region of

- chronic restraint stress rats after Electroacupuncture (EA) pretreatment. *Evid. base Compl. Alternative Med.* <https://doi.org/10.1155/2014/369158>.
- Hadlandmyth, K., Dailey, D.L., Rakel, B.A., Zimmerman, M.B., Vance, C.G.T., Merriwether, E.N., Chiment, R.L., Geasland, K.M., Crofford, L.J., Sluka, K.A., 2020. Somatic symptom presentations in women with fibromyalgia are differentially associated with elevated depression and anxiety. *J. Health Psychol.* 25, 819–829. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105317736577>.
- Harden, R.N., Bruehl, S., Perez, R.S.G.M., Birklein, F., Marinus, J., Maihofner, C., Lubenow, T., Buvanendran, A., MacKey, S., Graciosa, J., Mogilevski, M., Ramsden, C., Chont, M., Vatine, J.J., 2010. Validation of proposed diagnostic criteria (the “budapest criteria”) for complex regional pain syndrome. *Pain* 150, 268. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PAIN.2010.04.030>.
- Hata’ Eiji, T., And, I., Nishikawa, H., 1995. Behavioral characteristics of SART-stressed mice in the forced swim test and drug action. *Pharmacol. Biochem. Behav.* 51, 849–853.
- Henaio-Pérez, M., López-Medina, D.C., Arboleda, A., Bedoya Monsalve, S., Zea, J.A., 2022. Patients with fibromyalgia, depression, and/or anxiety and sex differences. <https://doi.org/10.1177/155798832211035116>.
- Hinwood, M., Morandini, J., Day, T.A., Walker, F.R., 2012. Evidence that microglia mediate the neurobiological effects of chronic psychological stress on the medial prefrontal cortex. *Cerebr. Cortex* 22, 1442–1454. <https://doi.org/10.1093/CERCOR/BHR229>.
- Hubbard, C.S., Lazaridou, A., Cahalan, C.M., Kim, J., Edwards, R.R., Napadow, V., Loggia, M.L., 2020. Aberrant salience? Brain hyperactivation in response to pain onset and offset in fibromyalgia. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 72, 1203–1213. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ART.41220/ABSTRACT>.
- Hubner de Souza, A., Martins da Costa Lopes, A., Castro, Jr C.J., Maria Rita Pereira, E., Peres Klein, C., Antonio da Silva Jr, C., Figueira da Silva, J., Ferreira, J., Vinicius Gomez, M., 2014. The effects of Phal1b, a spider toxin, calcium channel blocker. In: *A Mouse Fibromyalgia Model*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.toxicol.2014.01.015>.
- Hung, C.H., Lee, C.H., Tsai, M.H., Chen, C.H., Lin, H.F., Hsu, C.Y., Lai, C.L., Chen, C.C., 2020. Activation of acid-sensing ion channel 3 by lysophosphatidylcholine 16: 0 mediates psychological stress-induced fibromyalgia-like pain. *Ann. Rheum. Dis.* 79, 1644–1656. <https://doi.org/10.1136/ANNRHEUMDIS-2020-218329>.
- Jablochkova, A., Bäckryd, E., Kosek, E., Mannerkorpi, K., Ernberg, M., Gerdle, B., Ghafouri, B., 2019. Unaltered low nerve growth factor and high brain-derived neurotrophic factor levels in plasma from patients with fibromyalgia after a 15-week progressive resistance exercise. *J. Rehabil. Med.* 51, 779–787. <https://doi.org/10.2340/16501977-2593>.
- Jeon, S.Y., Seo, S., Lee, J.S., Choi, S.H., Lee, D.H., Jung, Y.H., Song, M.K., Lee, K.J., Kim, Y.C., Kwon, H.W., Im, H.J., Lee, D.S., Cheon, G.J., Kang, D.H., 2017. [11C]-(R)-PK11195 positron emission tomography in patients with complex regional pain syndrome: a pilot study. *Medicine (Baltim.)* 96 (1), e5735. <https://doi.org/10.1097/MD.0000000000005735>. PMID: 28072713; PMCID: PMC5228673.
- Jeong, J.Y., Lee, D.H., Kang, S.S., 2013. Effects of chronic restraint stress on body weight, food intake, and hypothalamic gene expressions in mice. *Endocrinol. Metab.* 28, 288. <https://doi.org/10.3803/ENM.2013.28.4.288>.
- Jung, C., Ichesco, E., Ratai, E.M., Gonzalez, R.G., Burdo, T., Loggia, M.L., Harris, R.E., Napadow, V., 2020. Magnetic resonance imaging of neuroinflammation in chronic pain: a role for astroglia? *Pain* 161, 1555–1564. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000001815>.
- Karlsson, B., Burell, G., Kristiansson, P., Björkegren, K., Nyberg, F., Svärdsudd, K., 2019. Decline of substance P levels after stress management with cognitive behaviour therapy in women with the fibromyalgia syndrome. *Scand. J. Pain* 19, 473–482. https://doi.org/10.1515/SJPAIN-2018-0324/DOWNLOADASSET/SUPPL/SJPAIN-2018-0324_SUPPL.ZIP.
- Karlsson, B., Nyberg, F., Svärdsudd, K., Burell, G., Björkegren, K., Kristiansson, P., 2023. Neuropeptide Y and measures of stress in a longitudinal study of women with the fibromyalgia syndrome. *Scand. J. Pain* 23, 59–65. https://doi.org/10.1515/SJPAIN-2022-0016/DOWNLOADASSET/SUPPL/SJPAIN-2022-0016_SUPPL.XLS.
- Kaur, A., Singh, L., Singh, N., Bhatti, M.S., Bhatti, R., 2019. Ameliorative effect of imperatorin in chemically induced fibromyalgia: role of NMDA/NFκB mediated downstream signaling. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bcp.2019.05.012>.
- Khasar, S.G., Green, P.G., Levine, J.D., 2005. Repeated sound stress enhances inflammatory pain in the rat. *Pain* 116, 79–86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PAIN.2005.03.040>.
- Khoonsari, P.E., Musunri, S., Herman, S., Svensson, C.I., Tanum, L., Gordh, T., Kultima, K., 2019. Systematic analysis of the cerebrospinal fluid proteome of fibromyalgia patients. *J. Proteomics* 190, 35–43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JPROT.2018.04.014>.
- Kopp, B.L., Wick, D., Herman, J.P., 2013. Differential effects of homotypic vs. heterotypic chronic stress regimens on microglial activation in the prefrontal cortex. *Physiol. Behav.* 122, 246–252. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PHYSBEH.2013.05.030>.
- Krock, E., Morado-Urbina, C.E., Menezes, J., Hunt, M.A., Sandström, A., Kadetoff, D., Tour, J., Verma, V., Kultima, K., Haglund, L., Meloto, C.B., Diatchenko, L., Kosek, E., Svensson, C.I., 2023. Fibromyalgia patients with elevated levels of anti-satellite glia cell immunoglobulin G antibodies present with more severe symptoms. *Pain* 164, 1828–1840. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000002881>.
- Lambert, K.G., Gerecke, K.M., Quadros, P.S., Doudera, E., Jasnow, A.M., Kinsley, C.H., 2000. Activity-stress increases density of GFAP-immunoreactive astrocytes in the rat hippocampus. *Stress* 3. <https://doi.org/10.3109/10253890009001133>.
- Liang, S., Wang, T., Hu, X., Luo, J., Li, W., Wu, X., Duan, Y., Jin, F., 2015. Administration of *Lactobacillus helveticus* N88 improves behavioral, cognitive, and biochemical aberrations caused by chronic restraint stress. *Neuroscience* 310, 561–577. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.NEUROSCIENCE.2015.09.033>.
- Liao, H.Y., Lin, Y.W., 2021. Electroacupuncture reduces cold stress-induced pain through microglial inactivation and transient receptor potential V1 in mice. *Chin. Med.* 16, 43. <https://doi.org/10.1186/S13020-021-00451-0>.
- Lithwick, A., Lev, S., Binshtok, A.M., 2013. Chronic pain-related remodeling of cerebral cortex - “pain memory”: a possible target for treatment of chronic pain. *Pain Manag.* 3, 35–45. <https://doi.org/10.2217/PMT.12.74>.
- Liu, D., Tang, Q.Q., Yin, C., Song, Yu, Liu, Y., Yang, J.X., Liu, H., Zhang, Y.M., Wu, S.Y., Song, Ying, Juarez, B., Ding, H.L., Han, M.H., Zhang, H., Cao, J.L., 2018. Brain-derived neurotrophic factor-mediated projection-specific regulation of depressive-like and nociceptive behaviors in the mesolimbic reward circuitry. *Pain* 159, 175–188. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000001083>.
- Liu, Y., Zhang, T., Meng, D., Sun, L., Yang, G., He, Y., Zhang, C., 2020. Involvement of CX3CL1/CX3CR1 in depression and cognitive impairment induced by chronic unpredictable stress and relevant underlying mechanism. *Behav. Brain Res.* 381. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.BBR.2019.112371>.
- Liu, Y.T., Shao, Y.W., Yen, C.T., Shaw, F.Z., 2014. Acid-induced hyperalgesia and anxiety-depressive comorbidity in rats. *Physiol. Behav.* 131, 105–110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PHYSBEH.2014.03.030>.
- Lottering, B., Lin, Y.W., 2021. TRPV1 responses in the cerebellum lobules VI, VII, VIII using electroacupuncture treatment for chronic pain and depression comorbidity in a murine model. *Int. J. Mol. Sci.* 22. <https://doi.org/10.3390/IJMS22095028>. Page 5028 22, 5028.
- Macfarlane, G.J., Kronisch, C., Dean, L.E., Atzeni, F., Häuser, W., Flub, E., Choy, E., Kosek, E., Amris, R., Branco, J., Dincer, F., Leino-Arjas, P., Longle, K., McCarthy, G. M., Makri, S., Perrot, S., Sarzi-Puttini, P., Taylor, A., Jones, G.T., 2017. EULAR revised recommendations for the management of fibromyalgia. *Ann. Rheum. Dis.* 76, 318–328. <https://doi.org/10.1136/ANNRHEUMDIS-2016-209724>.
- McCutcheon, R.A., Bloomfield, M.A.P., Dahoun, T., Mehta, M., Howes, O.D., 2019. Chronic psychosocial stressors are associated with alterations in salience processing and corticostriatal connectivity. *Schizophr. Res.* 213, 56–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.SCHRES.2018.12.011>.
- McWilliams, L.A., Cox, B.J., Enns, M.W., 2003. Mood and anxiety disorders associated with chronic pain: an examination in a nationally representative sample. *Pain* 106, 127–133. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0304-3959\(03\)00301-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0304-3959(03)00301-4).
- Merriwether, E.N., Agalave, N.M., Dailey, D.L., Rakel, B.A., Kolker, S.J., Lenert, M.E., Spagnola, W.H., Lu, Y., Geasland, K.M., Allen, L.A.H., Burton, M.D., Sluka, K.A., 2021. IL-5 mediates monocyte phenotype and pain outcomes in fibromyalgia. *Pain* 162, 1468–1482. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000002089>.
- Montserrat-De La Paz, S., Dolores García-Giménez, M., Ngel-Martín, M.A., Marín-Aguilar, F., Ferná Ndez-Arche, A., 2013. Dietary supplementation evening primrose oil improve symptoms of fibromyalgia syndrome. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jff.2013.04.012>.
- Munipalli, B., Allman, M.E., Chauhan, M., Niazi, S.K., Rivera, F., Abril, A., Wang, B., Wiecezorek, M.A., Hodge, D.O., Knight, D., Perlman, A., Abu Dabrh, A.M., Dudenkov, D., Bruce, B.K., 2022. Depression: a modifiable risk factor for poor outcomes in fibromyalgia. *J. Prim. Care Community Health* 13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21501319221120738>.
- Nagakura, Y., Miwa, M., Yoshida, M., Miura, R., Tanei, S., Tsuji, M., Takeda, H., 2019. Spontaneous pain-associated facial expression and efficacy of clinically used drugs in the reserpine-induced rat model of fibromyalgia. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejphar.2019.127216>.
- Nagakura, Y., Oe, T., Aoki, T., Matsuoka, N., 2009. Biogenic amine depletion causes chronic muscular pain and tactile allodynia accompanied by depression: a putative animal model of fibromyalgia. *Pain* 146, 26–33. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PAIN.2009.05.024>.
- Nasseff, M.T., Ma, W., Singh, J.P., Dozono, N., Lançon, K., Séguéla, P., Darcq, E., Ueda, H., Kieffer, B.L., 2021. Chronic generalized pain disrupts whole brain functional connectivity in mice. *Brain Imaging Behav* 15, 2406. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11682-020-00438-9>.
- Nazeri, M., Zarei, M.R., Pourzare, A.R., Ghahregh-Chahi, H.R., Abareghi, F., Shabani, M., 2018. Evidence of altered trigeminal nociception in an animal model of fibromyalgia. *Pain Med.* 19, 328–335. <https://doi.org/10.1093/PM/PNX114>.
- Nicholas, M., Vlaeyen, J.W.S., Rief, W., Barke, A., Aziz, Q., Benoliel, R., Cohen, M., Evers, S., Giamberardino, M.A., Goebel, A., Korwisi, B., Perrot, S., Svensson, P., Wang, S.J., Treede, R.D., 2019. The IASP classification of chronic pain for ICD-11: chronic primary pain. *Pain* 160, 28–37. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000001390>.
- Nishiyori, M., Ueda, H., 2008. Prolonged gabapentin analgesia in an experimental mouse model of fibromyalgia. *Mol. Pain* 4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1744-8069-4-52>.
- O’Connor, K.A., Johnson, J.D., Hansen, M.K., Wieseler Frank, J.L., Maksimova, E., Watkins, L.R., Maier, S.F., 2003. Peripheral and central proinflammatory cytokine response to a severe acute stressor. *Brain Res.* 991, 123–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.BRAINRES.2003.08.006>.
- Ott, S., Maihofner, C., 2018. Signs and symptoms in 1,043 patients with complex regional pain syndrome. *J. Pain* 19, 599–611. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JPAIN.2018.01.004>.
- Pagliusi, M., Bonet, I.J.M., Brandão, A.F., Magalhães, S.F., Tambelli, C.H., Parada, C.A., Sartori, C.R., 2020. Therapeutic and preventive effect of voluntary running wheel exercise on social defeat stress (SDS)-induced depressive-like behavior and chronic pain in mice. *Neuroscience* 428, 165–177. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.NEUROSCIENCE.2019.12.037>.
- Patani, R., Hardingham, G.E., Liddelow, S.A., 2023. Functional roles of reactive astrocytes in neuroinflammation and neurodegeneration. *Nat. Rev. Neurol.* 197 19, 395–409. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41582-023-00822-1>.
- Piardi, L.N., Pagliusi, M., Bonet, I.J.M., Brandão, A.F., Magalhães, S.F., Zanelatto, F.B., Tambelli, C.H., Parada, C.A., Sartori, C.R., 2020. Social stress as a trigger for

- depressive-like behavior and persistent hyperalgesia in mice: study of the comorbidity between depression and chronic pain. *J. Affect. Disord.* 274, 759–767. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JAD.2020.05.144>.
- Platt, Jane E., Stone, Eric A., Platt, J.E., Stone, E.A., 1982. Chronic restraint stress elicits a positive antidepressant response on the forced swim test. *Eur. J. Pharmacol.* 82, 179–181.
- Qu, T.T., Deng, J.X., Li, R.L., Cui, Z.J., Wang, X.Q., Wang, L., Deng, J.B., 2017. Stress injuries and autophagy in mouse hippocampus after chronic cold exposure. *Neural Regen. Res.* 12, 440–446. <https://doi.org/10.4103/1673-5374.202932>.
- Quintero, L., Cuesta, M.C., Silva, J.A., Arcaya, J.L., Pinerua-Suhaibar, L., Maixner, W., Suarez-Roca, H., 2003. Repeated swim stress increases pain-induced expression of c-Fos in the rat lumbar cord. *Brain Res.* 965, 259–268. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0006-8993\(02\)04224-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0006-8993(02)04224-5).
- Quintero, L., Moreno, M., Avila, C., Arcaya, J., Maixner, W., Suarez-Roca, H., 2000. Long-lasting delayed hyperalgesia after subchronic swim stress. *Pharmacol. Biochem. Behav.* 67, 449–458. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0091-3057\(00\)00374-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0091-3057(00)00374-9).
- Richter-Levin, G., Xu, L., 2018. How could stress lead to major depressive disorder? *IBRO reports* 4, 38–43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.IBROR.2018.04.001>.
- Sandström, A., Ellerbrock, I., Löfgren, M., Altawil, R., Bileviciute-Ljungar, I., Lampa, J., Kosek, E., 2022. Distinct aberrations in cerebral pain processing differentiating patients with fibromyalgia from patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Pain* 163, 538–547. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000002387>.
- Sandström, A., Ellerbrock, I., Tour, J., Kadetoff, D., Jensen, K.B., Kosek, E., 2020. Neural correlates of conditioned pain responses in fibromyalgia subjects indicate preferential formation of new pain associations rather than extinction of irrelevant ones. *Pain* 161, 2079–2088. <https://doi.org/10.1097/J.PAIN.0000000000001907>.
- Scheich, B., Vincze, P., Szöke, Borbély, Hunyady, Szolcsányi J., Dénes, Környei, Z., Gaszner, B., Helyes, Z., 2017. Chronic stress-induced mechanical hyperalgesia is controlled by capsaicin-sensitive neurons in the mouse. *Eur. J. Pain* 21, 1417–1431. <https://doi.org/10.1002/EJP.1043>.
- Scholz, J., Finnerup, N.B., Attal, N., Aziz, Q., Baron, R., Bennett, M.I., Benoliel, R., Cohen, M., Cruccu, G., Davis, K.D., Evers, S., First, M., Giambardino, M.A., Hansson, P., Kaasa, S., Korwisi, B., Kosek, E., Lavand'Homme, P., Nicholas, M., Nurmiikko, T., Perrot, S., Raja, S.N., Rice, A.S.C., Rowbotham, M.C., Schug, S., Simpson, D.M., Smith, B.H., Svensson, P., Vlaeyen, J.W.S., Wang, S.J., Barke, A., Rief, W., Treede, R.D., 2019. The IASP classification of chronic pain for ICD-11: chronic neuropathic pain. *Pain*. <https://doi.org/10.1097/j.pain.0000000000001365>.
- Seewoo, B.J., Hennessy, L.A., Feindel, K.W., Etherington, S.J., Croarkin, P.E., Rodger, J., 2020. Validation of chronic restraint stress model in Young adult rats for the study of depression using longitudinal multimodal MR imaging. *eNeuro* 7, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1523/ENEURO.0113-20.2020>.
- Seo, S., Jung, Y.H., Lee, D., Lee, W.J., Jang, J.H., Lee, J.Y., Choi, S.H., Moon, J.Y., Lee, J. S., Cheon, G.J., Kang, D.H., 2021. Abnormal neuroinflammation in fibromyalgia and CRPS using ¹¹C-(R)-PK11195 PET. *PLoS One* 16 (2), e0246152. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246152>. PMID: 33556139; PMCID: PMC7870009.
- Seto, A., Han, X., Price, L.L., Harvey, W.F., Bannuru, R.R., Wang, C., 2019. The role of personality in patients with fibromyalgia. *Clin. Rheumatol.* 38, 149–157. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10067-018-4316-7>.
- Shi, M., Wang, J.Y., Luo, F., 2010. Depression shows divergent effects on evoked and spontaneous pain behaviors in rats. *J. Pain* 11, 219–229. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JPAIN.2009.07.002>.
- Sluka, K.A., Clauw, D.J., 2016. Neurobiology of fibromyalgia and chronic widespread pain. *Neuroscience* 338, 114–129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.NEUROSCIENCE.2016.06.006>.
- Sluka, K.A., Kalra, A., Moore, S.A., 2001. UNILATERAL INTRAMUSCULAR INJECTIONS OF ACIDIC SALINE PRODUCE A BILATERAL LONG-LASTING HYPERALGESIA. <https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4598>.
- Suarez-Roca, H., Quintero, L., Avila, R., Medina, S., De Freitas, M., Cárdenas, R., 2014. Central immune overactivation in the presence of reduced plasma corticosterone contributes to swim stress-induced hyperalgesia. *Brain Res. Bull.* 100, 61–69. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brainresbull.2013.11.003>.
- Suto, B., Sztitter, I., Bagoly, T., Pinter, E., Szolcsányi, J., Loibl, C., Nemeth, T., Tanczos, K., Molnar, T., Leiner, T., Varnai, B., Bardonicsek, Z., Helyes, Z., 2014. Plasma somatostatin-like immunoreactivity increases in the plasma of septic patients and rats with systemic inflammatory reaction: experimental evidence for its sensory origin and protective role. *Peptides* 54, 49–57. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PEPTIDES.2014.01.006>.
- Taguchi, T., Katanosaka, K., Yasui, M., Hayashi, K., Yamashita, M., Wakatsuki, K., Kiyama, H., Yamanaka, A., Mizumura, K., 2015. Peripheral and spinal mechanisms of nociception in a rat reserpine-induced pain model. *Pain* 156, 415–427. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.J.PAIN.0000460334.49525.5E>.
- Theoharides, T.C., Tsilioni, I., Bawazeer, M., 2019. Mast cells, neuroinflammation and pain in fibromyalgia syndrome. *Front. Cell. Neurosci.* 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FNCEL.2019.00353/FULL>.
- Tsilioni, I., Russell, I.J., Stewart, J.M., Gleason, R.M., Theoharides, T.C., 2016. Neuropeptides CRH, SP, HK-1, and inflammatory cytokines IL-6 and TNF are increased in serum of patients with fibromyalgia syndrome, implicating mast cells. *J. Pharmacol. Exp. Therapeut.* 356, 664–672. <https://doi.org/10.1124/JPET.115.230060>.
- Wählén, K., Ernberg, M., Kosek, E., Mannerkorpi, K., Gerdle, B., Ghafouri, B., 2020. Significant correlation between plasma proteome profile and pain intensity, sensitivity, and psychological distress in women with fibromyalgia. *Sci. Rep.* 10 1, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-69422-z>.
- Wan, B., Gebauer, S., Salas, J., Jacobs, C.K., Breeden, M., Scherrer, J.F., 2019. Gender-stratified prevalence of psychiatric and pain diagnoses in a primary care patient sample with fibromyalgia. *Pain Med.* 20, 2129–2133. <https://doi.org/10.1093/PM/PNZ084>.
- Wang, Z., Yuan, M., Xiao, J., Chen, L., Guo, X., Dou, Y., Jiang, F., Min, W., Zhou, B., 2022. Gray matter abnormalities in patients with chronic primary pain: a coordinate-based meta-analysis. *Pain Physician* 25, 1–13.
- Weber, T., Tatzl, E., Kashofer, K., Holter, M., Trajanoski, S., Berghold, A., Heinemann, A., Holzer, P., Herbert, M.K., 2022. Fibromyalgia-associated hyperalgesia is related to psychopathological alterations but not to gut microbiome changes. *PLoS One* 17, e0274026. <https://doi.org/10.1371/JOURNAL.PONE.0274026>.
- Weir, P.T., Harlan, G.A., Nkoy, F.L., Jones, S.S., Hegmann, K.T., Gren, L.H., Lyon, J.L., 2006. The incidence of fibromyalgia and its associated comorbidities: a population-based retrospective cohort study based on International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision codes. *J. Clin. Rheumatol.* 12, 124–128. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.RHU.0000221817.46231.18>.
- Wells, J.A., Shibata, S., Fujikawa, A., Takahashi, M., Saga, T., Aoki, I., 2017. Functional MRI of the reserpine-induced putative rat model of fibromyalgia reveals discriminatory patterns of functional augmentation to acute nociceptive stimuli. *Sci. Rep.* 7 (1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1038/srep38325>.
- Wippert, P.M., Puerto Valencia, L., Drießlein, D., 2022. Stress and pain. Predictive (Neuro)Pattern identification for chronic back pain: a longitudinal observational study. *Front. Med.* 9, 828954. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FMED.2022.828954/BIBTEX>.
- Xu, Y., Zhang, L., Shao, T., Ruan, L., Wang, L., Sun, J., Li, J., Zhu, X., O'Donnell, J.M., Pan, J., 2013. Ferulic acid increases pain threshold and ameliorates depression-like behaviors in reserpine-treated mice: behavioral and neurobiological analyses. *Metab. Brain Dis.* 28, 571–583. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11011-013-9404-4/FIGURES/6>.
- Yao, X., Li, L., Kandhare, A., Mukherjee-Kandhare, A., Bodhankar, S., 2020. Attenuation of reserpine-induced fibromyalgia via ROS and serotonergic pathway modulation by fisetin, a plant flavonoid polyphenol. *Exp. Ther. Med.* 19. <https://doi.org/10.3892/ETM.2019.8328>.
- Yin, W., Mei, L., Sun, T., Wang, Y., Chen, C., Farzinpour, Z., Mao, Y., Tao, W., Li, Juan, Xie, W., Zhang, Z., 2020. A central amygdala-ventrolateral periaqueductal gray matter pathway for pain in a mouse model of depression-like behavior. *Anesthesiology* 132, 1175–1196. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ALN.0000000000003133>.
- Yu, B., Meng, Y., Zhuang, L., Xue, Q., Zhang, J., 2021. NLRP3-mediated neuroinflammation exacerbates incisional hyperalgesia and prolongs recovery after surgery in chronic stressed rats. *Pain Physician* 24, E1099–E1108.
- Zhao, J., Shi, W., Lu, Y., Gao, X., Wang, A., Zhang, S., Du, Y., Wang, Y., Li, L., 2022. Alterations of monoamine neurotransmitters, HPA-axis hormones, and inflammation cytokines in reserpine-induced hyperalgesia and depression comorbidity rat model. *BMC Psychiatry* 22, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/S12888-022-04065-0/FIGURES/7>.
- Zhong, F., Liu, L., Wei, J.L., Hu, Z.L., Li, L., Wang, S., Xu, J.M., Zhou, X.F., Li, C.Q., Yang, Z.Y., Dai, R.P., 2019. Brain-derived neurotrophic factor precursor in the hippocampus regulates both depressive and anxiety-like behaviors in rats. *Front. Psychiatr.* 10, 430638. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYT.2018.00776/BIBTEX>.