

J Elert et al Journal of Rheumatology. June (2001) Vol. 28 #6 p 1361.

A study of muscle tension in cases diagnosed with Fibromyalgia (FM) and Whiplash Associated Disorder (WAD).

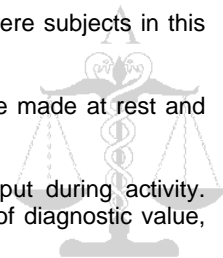
Some, proposed, mechanisms for Diffuse RSI, FM and WAD include the expectation of increased muscle tension at rest. This may occur before and after symptoms become problematic.

59 consecutive patients with FM(36) or chronic WAD(23) and 27 female controls were subjects in this study.

Muscle activity was measured using electromyography (EMG). Measurements were made at rest and during activity.

Both sets of patients had marginally increased resting tension and reduced output during activity. However, differences between cases and controls were not reliable enough to be of diagnostic value, some controls and some cases had interchangeable characteristics.

Initial power upon taking action was a much clearer effect showing that cases were less able to quickly come to full force.



Comment

Theories of the pathogenesis of DRSI have tended towards a reliance on muscle tension as part of the process. This research suggests little support for this once cases have become established. Proposed links between stress and DRSI may be weakened by this finding.

Studies of muscle tension before cases become established would be needed to reaffirm the belief in tension as a factor in the pathogenesis of DRSI.
