

## **Fibromyalgia and Personality: A Review of the Different Personality Types Identified**

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**Abstract :** Fibromyalgia (FM) is a musculoskeletal disorder affecting men and women of different ages and cultures. The cause of this disorder is unknown; however, studies suggest an etiology that involves biological and psychosocial factors. Few studies have shown that a personality type such as neuroticism is associated with chronic pain conditions. Past research has explored whether patients with FM present with a specific personality trait. However, studies have used different methods (i.e. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), Sociotropy and Autonomy Scale (SAS) and Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS), Tridimensional Personality Questionnaire or Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI), Karolinska scale of personality, Big Five Inventory or NEO Personality Inventory) to explore the connection between FM and a personality type. They have identified personality types that present similar characteristics but vary in the name (i.e. high harm avoidance and low novelty seeking, psychasthenia/muscular tension/somatic anxiety, neuroticism). Although Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire and the Big Five Inventory differ in terms of content and structure, both of them identify neuroticism as the personality type of FM patients, and the former also identifies these patients as having a low sociability personality trait. Previous research also shows a trend of sociotropic personality style with FM patients that also suffer from Major Depressive Disorder. Participants in these studies were, for the most part, adult female and researchers have recognized that as a limitation and whether their findings can be generalized to men and younger patients with FM. Furthermore, most studies reviewed were conducted in Europe (i.e. Spain) and had a cross-sectional design. Future research should replicate past studies in different countries and consider conducting a longitudinal study. Although it is suspected that FM course is modulated by FM patients' personality, it is not known whether individuals with similar personalities will develop FM. This review sought to explain the differences and similarities between the personality types identified. Limitations in the studies reviewed were addressed, and considerations for future research and treatment were discussed.

**Keywords :** chronic pain, fibromyalgia, neuroticism, personality type

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