

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Suzi Prokell  
Prokell Publicity, Inc.  
(817) 598-1556  
suzi@prokell.com

### **SYMPTOMS OF ECONOMIC STRESS MIMIC FIBROMYALGIA**

*Differences can be difficult to discern; National Fibromyalgia Awareness Day May 12*

PHILADELPHIA (March 24, 2009) – Anxiety, exhaustion and disturbed sleep. Sound familiar? Could be you are one of millions of Americans now suffering these symptoms as the result of stress over a slumping economy.

However, they are also symptoms associated with fibromyalgia, a more serious chronic condition that often goes undiagnosed. How do you know the difference?

“Because of its complex nature and a lack of one specific test, many doctors have misdiagnosed fibromyalgia symptoms over the years or dismissed them as being in the patient’s head,” said Dr. Andre Garabedian of the Fibromyalgia and Fatigue Centers. “Now that so many more are seeking medical intervention for their severe pain, extreme fatigue, stress and sleeplessness seemingly brought on by world events, it’s quite possible that an existing condition such as fibromyalgia could easily be overlooked.”

It’s estimated more than 12 million people in the U.S. suffer from fibromyalgia, a debilitating condition characterized by a feeling of exhaustion, positive tender point exam, body aches and muscle stiffness. Often accompanied by other symptoms such irritable bowel syndrome, sleep disturbance, headaches, anxiety, depression and a variety of other symptoms, fibromyalgia can affect any gender or age, but predominately strikes women between 35 and 54.

The frequency and severity of symptoms can be a clue that something serious may be going on. “We recognize there’s a lot of stress out there right now,” said Dr. Garabedian. “The thing to be mindful of is whether the symptoms increasingly interfere

with your ability to function at the level you desire. Anything that becomes debilitating to an individual requires medical attention. Don't just assume it will go away on its own."

Fibromyalgia has emerged from the shadows in recent years as the medical and pharmaceutical community acknowledged its existence. Doctors hope additional attention is given to this little known disease through **National Fibromyalgia Awareness Day, Tuesday, May 12**. Since its inception in 1997, the National Fibromyalgia Association (NFA) has been the organization leading the call for increased recognition of the disease, staging national and international events in honor of Awareness Day.

Fibromyalgia and Fatigue Center doctors are currently the only specialists with experience treating fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, and fatigue-related conditions. There is no single laboratory test available to diagnose fibromyalgia but instead a myriad of tests that must be properly evaluated by doctors with experience in diagnosing these conditions. Doctors must also rely on patient histories, self-reported symptoms, a physical examination and an accurate manual tender-point examination.

FFC develops, operates and manages 12 outpatient "Centers of Excellence" in the U.S. for the treatment and ongoing care of people diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue & Immune Dysfunction Syndrome, and Unrelenting Fatigue. Centers are currently open in Atlanta, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Fort Worth, Las Vegas, Norwalk, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland and Seattle.

For more information, please visit [www.fibroandfatigue.com](http://www.fibroandfatigue.com) or call (866) 443-4276.

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