

FIT CRITERIA for the Assessment of Neuroplastic Conditions

Is your pain neuroplastic?

It is crucial to carefully evaluate your situation to determine if a mindbody approach can work for your chronic symptoms.

STEP 1: Rule OUT a structural or systemic problem:

This means you should first get a medical workup from your physician or medical team. Ideally, they would be Mindbody Medicine informed.

(Disclaimer: most people I work with have seen MANY medical providers, have gotten several structural diagnoses, and tried many of the standard treatments to no avail. Unfortunately, mindbody approaches are not medical mainstream just yet. But it's important to rule out major red flags such as cancer, autoimmune issues, fractures, or infections, and any physician can do that.)

STEP 2: Rule IN a Mindbody Condition

(aka neuroplastic pain, neural circuit disorder, psychophysiologic disorder (PPD), TMS, Mindbody Syndrome, etc.)

The presence of specific criteria make a mindbody condition more likely. They are grouped into three categories: Functional, Inconsistent, or Triggered. These 'F.I.T. Criteria' have been developed by Dr. Howard Schubiner, an icon in mind-body medicine.

FIT CRITERIA for the Assessment of Neuroplastic Conditions

Functional:

- Symptoms begin without a physical precipitation
- Symptoms persist after an injury has healed
- Symptoms are in a distribution pattern that is symmetric
- Symptoms occur on one whole side of the body or occur on half of the face, head, or torso
- Symptoms spread over time to different areas of the body
- Symptoms radiate to the opposite side of the body or down a whole leg or arm
- Symptoms that occur in many different body parts at the same time
- Symptoms that have the quality of tingling, electric, burning, numb, hot or cold

Inconsistent:

- Symptoms shift from one location in the body to another
- Symptoms are more or less intense depending on the time of day, or occur first thing in the morning or in the middle of the night
- Symptoms occur after, but not during, activity or exercise
- Symptoms occur when one thinks about them or when someone asks about it
- Symptoms occur when stress increases or one thinks about stressful situations
- Symptoms are minimal or non-existent when engaged in joyful or distracting activities, such as when on vacation
- Symptoms are minimal or non-existent after some kind of therapy, such as massage, chiropractic, Reiki, acupuncture, an herbal or vitamin supplement

Triggered:

- Symptoms are triggered by things that are not related to the actual symptom, such as foods, smells, sounds, light, computer screens, menses, changes in the weather
- Symptoms are triggered by the anticipation of stress, such as prior to school, work, a doctor's visit, a medical test, a visit to a relative, or a social gathering; or during those activities
- Symptoms that are triggered by simply imagining engaging in the triggering activity, such as bending over, turning the neck, sitting or standing—diagnostic AND therapeutic test
- Symptoms are triggered by light touch or innocuous stimuli, such as the wind or cold