

What is Guillain Barre Syndrome (GBS)?

GBS is an inflammatory disorder of the nerves outside the brain and spinal cord (peripheral nerves). It is characterized by the rapid onset of numbness, weakness, and often paralysis of the legs, arms, breathing muscles, and face. Paralysis is ascending, meaning that it travels up the limbs from fingers and toes towards the torso. Loss of reflexes, such as the knee jerk, are usually found. It is characterized by the rapid onset of numbness, weakness and often paralysis of the body. It affects 2 in 100,000 individuals per year.

What is Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP)?

Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP) is the chronic form of GBS. It is a rare disorder of the peripheral nerves characterized by gradually increasing sensory loss and weakness associated with loss of reflexes. The number of new cases per year of CIDP is about 1-2 per 100,000 people, but as the disease can be present in a person for years prior to diagnosis, the prevalence reflecting the accumulation of cases over time may be as high as 9 per 100,000 in some areas. CIDP can start at any age and is more frequent in men than women. CIDP is not self-limiting or spontaneous. Left untreated, 30% of CIDP patients will progress to wheelchair dependence. Early recognition and proper treatment can avoid a significant amount of disability.

What is Multifocal Motor Neuropathy (MMN)

MMN is a rare disorder in which focal areas of multiple motor nerves are attacked by one's own immune system. Typically, MMN is slowly progressive, resulting in asymmetrical weakness of a patient's limbs. Patients with MMN can have other symptoms, including twitching, or small random dimpling of the muscle under the skin which neurologists call fasciculations. The prevalence of this very rare disease is estimated to be 0.6 cases in every 100,000 people, which makes it even rarer than GBS. MMN has many features similar to CIDP in that its onset is progressive over time, causing increased disability that reflects the greater number of nerve sites involved. However, unlike CIDP, MMN is asymmetric and affects the right and left side of the body differently.

IVig Treatment - IVig, or intravenous immunoglobulin, is a therapy for chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy. Immunoglobulin is another name for antibodies that come from donated human plasma. It provides healthy antibodies to block the immune and inflammatory processes that attack and destroy myelin. Source plasma and recovered plasma are used to produce therapies that treat people with rare, chronic diseases such as GBS, CIDP, or variants of the condition such as MMN.

The GBS/CIDP Foundation International is working for a future when no one with Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS), chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP), and related syndromes such as multifocal motor neuropathy (MMN) suffers alone and that everyone has access to the right diagnosis and the right treatment, right away.

Guillain-Barre Syndrome ■ Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy

Provided as educational information by the GBS|CIDP Foundation International. Newly diagnosed patients and families are invited to contact the Foundation for educational literature, local chapter information, and visits by recovered patients.

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