



Facts About Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)

What is CFS?

The early sign of this illness is a strong and noticeable fatigue that comes on suddenly and often comes and goes or never stops. The illness does not improve with rest and may be worsened by physical or mental activity. People with CFS often function at a substantially lower level of activity than they were capable of before the onset of the illness. CFS is diagnosed more often in women than in men.

What are the symptoms/ warning signs of CFS?

To be diagnosed with CFS, an individual must satisfy two criteria:

1. Severe chronic fatigue must have lasted at least six months with other known medical conditions excluded by clinical diagnoses.
2. The individual must concurrently have four or more of the following symptoms: substantial impairment in short-term memory or concentration; sore throat; tender lymph nodes; muscle pain; multi-joint pain without swelling or redness; headaches of a new type, pattern or severity; unrefreshing sleep; and post-exertional malaise lasting more than 24 hours. The symptoms must have persisted or recurred during six or more consecutive months and must not have predated the fatigue.

What causes CFS?

The causes for CFS are unknown. One possibility is that CFS represents an endpoint of disease resulting from multiple precipitating causes. Some conditions that have been proposed to trigger the development of CFS include viral infections or other transient traumatic conditions, stress, and toxins.

Is there any treatment?

There is currently no cure for CFS. The therapies for this disorder are directed at symptom relief. It's important to maintain good health by eating a healthful, balanced diet and getting adequate rest, exercising regularly, and pacing oneself because too much stress can aggravate the symptoms of CFS.

For more information on Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, go to the following sites:

MEDLINEplus

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/chronicfatiguesyndrome.html>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Infectious Diseases

www.cdc.gov/cfs

CFIDS Association of America

www.cfids.org

Wellness