

What Is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)?

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) is a condition in which very modest degrees of physical or mental exertion induce severe fatigue. Increased activity typically causes symptoms to worsen. These exacerbations might not appear for several hours, or even until the next day. Over-doing can cause a flare-up that last for hours or even days.

The federal government's Center for Disease Control has established working criteria for the diagnosis of CFS.

To diagnose CFS, there must be persistent or relapsing, and debilitating fatigue that persists for 6 months or more. The fatigue must cause a substantial reduction of previous activity and not improve substantially with normal rest.

In addition, the patient must also meet four of these eight minor criteria:

1. Impaired memory or concentration
2. Sore throat
3. Painful/tender nodes especially cervical or axillary
4. Muscle pain
5. Multi-joint pain
6. New headaches
7. Unrefreshing sleep
8. Post-exertional malaise (lasting >24 hrs)

Appropriate alternative diagnoses need to be excluded as the main cause of the problem. If other potentially fatigue causing conditions are present (e.g. depression, insomnia, diabetes), the physician has to judge whether these or CFS are the main cause of symptoms. (Source: Fukuda, C. et. al., The chronic fatigue syndrome: a comprehensive approach to its definition and study. International Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Study Group. Annals of Internal Medicine 1994; Annals of Internal Medicine 1994;121:953)

Many people with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome also qualify for the diagnosis of Fibromyalgia and vice versa.

Many Chronic Fatigue Syndrome doctors believe that a holistic or functional medicine approach adds value to standard therapies by focusing on the body's natural healing systems and their crucial role in resisting and reversing illness. The unstated assumption is that mind and body function quite separately as if each organ within us acts largely on its own. However, current science tells a very different story.

Mind and body organs and systems act on each other. There is a complex web of hormonal, metabolic and biochemical inter-relations. At a deep level, even such distant organs as the brain, endocrine glands, immune system, gut, and liver coordinate their functions-- almost as if they were one.

Functional Medicine, we believe, creates added opportunities for healing. This holistic, complementary or alternative approach focuses on ways to strengthen the body's own natural healing systems. Much research suggests that better function for any one part of the healing web also acts to strengthen other parts of the system.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Diagnosis

Until fairly recently, many physicians believed that Chronic Fatigue Syndrome was in the same class of illness as psychologically-based anxiety or depression. Some still believe that, but almost all CFS experts are now firmly convinced that Chronic Fatigue Syndrome is a physical illness. CFS doctors agree that Chronic Fatigue Syndrome's cause and mechanism remain largely mysterious. When we examine a large number of CFS patients, we find an increased rate of abnormalities of the immune system and metabolism. However, these same abnormalities can also be found among some individuals who don't have CFS or even those who are healthy. So, we don't yet have a diagnostic lab test that reliably says who has CFS and who does not.

Many or most cases of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome appear to begin with a viral illness. However, bacterial infections, environmental toxins, and/or emotional distress may also be triggers. We are not yet sure whether those who are chronically ill have a continuing infection, or whether immune system, metabolic and neural damage perpetuates itself in other ways.

Finding your root cause of Fibromyalgia is the key to successful treatment.

There is a totally accurate non-invasive and quick diagnostic procedure which gets right to the root cause of Fibromyalgia...Clinical Kinesiology. CK is revered for its accuracy. Using a specialized form of muscle testing we can access information held deeply in your physiology and determine what toxins and opportunistic infections may be lurking there, creating your Fibromyalgia syndrome. Once the cause has been found, specific treatment can be implemented.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Treatments

The first step is usually to regain a sense of control by eliminating the toxins which have accumulated in your system, and also remove any secondary infections, thus reducing the disruptive symptoms that often complicate this disease. These include secondary pain, poor sleep, recurring infections, and secondary depression, nutritional deficiencies, thyroid and/or adrenal imbalance. At the same time, work to improve the natural healing systems that we normally rely on to overcome illness. It is of great practical importance to identify and remove obstacles to the function of these natural healing systems.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome specialists also often recommend the following important natural therapies:

Safe accurate detoxification program.

Nutritional advice regarding building immune system and energy.

Acupuncture for pain relief and to reduce inflammation.

META Medicine approach to addressing psychological stress, and low self esteem.

NLP, Hypnotherapy, and EFT to address the emotional factors involved.

Gentle graduated exercise as you improve to begin to regain strength and vitality.

Additional Strategies to Strengthen Chronic Fatigue Syndrome's Healing Systems

1. Test for essential fatty acid deficiencies and supplement when appropriate.
2. Evaluate the methylation/SAMe/folic acid/vitamin B12 pathways, which are essential for effective brain and liver function.
3. Analyze which vitamins and minerals are sub-optimal and supplement when appropriate.
4. Support the mitochondria's ability to manufacture ATP energy molecules. Options include: Riboflavin, Lipoic Acid, Enada (NADH) phosphatidyl serine, L-Carnitine, Acetyl-L-Carnitine, glutathione, CDP-choline, Coenzyme Q, and "adaptogenic" herbs.
5. Assess the quality of digestion and the gut's bacterial and yeast balance.
6. Measure the strengths and weaknesses of the liver's detoxification pathways.
7. Energy Therapies: Reiki and magnets are sometimes reported as helpful. Currently, we are studying a system of extremely low dose electrical stimulation to calm down the pain pathways in the spine and the brain.

For further information on Testing and treatment please contact Linda on
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