



Neuropathies

Neuropathy is a condition involving nerve damage. Neuropathy can affect movement, sensation (e.g., temperature, pain, touch), and functions, such as breathing and digestion. The symptoms of neuropathy vary depending on its underlying cause, the type of nerve(s) affected, their distribution and the severity of the disorder.

There are three types of peripheral nerves affected:

1. **Sensory Nerves:** affect sensation
2. **Autonomic Nerves:** affect internal organ functions; and,
3. **Motor Nerves:** affect muscles.

Pain is just one of several symptoms that you may experience when your sensory nerves are affected by neuropathy. You may also experience one or a combination of sensory symptoms resulting from insensitivity, hypersensitivity to touch and pressure, and impaired sense of position.

Numbness, Tingling and Pain

Sensory nerves, when damaged, can cause various symptoms. Early on, there may be spontaneous sensations, called paresthesias, which include numbness, tingling, pinching, sharp, deep stabs, electric shocks, or buzzing. These sensations are usually worse at night, and sometimes become painful and severe. You may also experience unpleasant abnormal sensations when you touch something, sensations called dysesthesias because they are caused by stimuli. Or, you may find yourself feeling nothing at all, in this case experiencing anesthesia, a lessening or absence of sensation.

Impaired Sense of Position

When you lose the ability to “sense” or feel your feet, you may experience a lack of coordination when you walk because you are not sure about the placement of your feet. You may find yourself walking differently without really knowing how or why you are doing so. Chances are you have either widened your style of walking (in an unconscious effort to keep your balance) or you may be dragging their feet.

“Glove and Stocking Sensation”

This phrase describes what doctors call your odd feeling of wearing stockings or gloves or slippers when, in fact, your hands and feet are completely bare.

Peripheral Neuropathy

Disorders of the peripheral nervous system may be genetic or acquired, progress quickly or slowly, involve motor, sensory, and/or autonomic nerves, and affect only certain nerves or all of them. It can cause pain or loss of sensation, weakness, paralysis, loss of reflexes, muscle atrophy, or, in autonomic neuropathies, disturbances of blood pressure, heart rate, or bladder and bowel control; impotence; and inability to focus the eyes. Some types damage the neuron itself, others the myelin sheath that insulates it.

Dr. John V. DeMaio, D.C., C.C.N. | **Dr. James Lindauer, D.C.**

The Village at Waugh Chapel: 2654 Brandermill Blvd., Gambrills, MD 21054

PHONE: 410-721-2222 FAX: 410-721-2437

Maryland Science and Technology Center: 17000 Science Dr., Ste 204, Bowie, MD 20715

PHONE: 301-262-4545 FAX: 301-262-7922



Neuropathies

Peripheral nerve damage can be caused by chronic alcohol use, vitamin deficiencies, exposure to certain industrial toxins, metals and medicines, autoimmune disorders and other body system diseases such as diabetes mellitus, leprosy and syphilis. Examples include carpal tunnel syndrome, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, poliomyelitis, and shingles. About 30% of people with nerve damage do not know how or why they got it; others have nerve damage and pain as part of a broader disorder, disease or condition.

Intercostal Neuralgia refers to pain in one or more intercostal spaces caused by inflammation of the intercostal nerves. It is caused mainly by pleuritis, pneumonia, costal chondritis, herpes zoster, or chest trauma. It is marked by persistent stabbing pain along the pathway of the affected intercostal nerves, radiating to the lumbar region of the affected side and aggravated by coughing or deep breathing. Localized hyperesthesia and tenderness are also present.

Ulnar Neuropathy is a condition where the ulnar nerve which runs down the length of the arm becomes trapped. The most common site for entrapment is the elbow and then the wrist. Nerve entrapment can result when the nerve becomes inflamed due to repetitive stress on the nerve such as in cyclists or typists. A broken elbow or fracture can also put pressure on the nerve. Neurological symptoms resulting from the trapped nerve include weakness, numbness, muscle wasting, pain and pins and needles sensation in portions of the lower arm controlled by the ulnar nerve (especially the little and ring fingers). Neuropathy refers to injury to the nerve. The ulnar nerve is also known as the funny bone as it passes through the elbow joint.

Trigeminal Neuralgia is perhaps the best known nerve pain disorder in the head and neck. It often happens suddenly as a sharp, shooting, shock-like pain that lasts a few seconds. There is usually a specific trigger area that causes the pain to occur when touched. People with TN are often unable to shave, comb their hair or touch their face for fear of causing pain. Sometimes the pain is triggered by slight movement of the affected part of the face. TN is more common after age 50 but can occur at any age.

Diabetic Nerve Pain is also called "diabetic peripheral neuropathic pain" (DPNP). It can develop in anyone who has diabetes. DPNP is a pain disorder of the feet, legs, hands and/or arms caused by nerve damage. People who have DPNP may feel various types of nerve pain including burning, stabbing and tingling. If DPNP is not treated by a health care provider, it can lead to more serious problems. However, it begins more often in those who do not or cannot control their diabetes.

Dr. John V. DeMaio, D.C., C.C.N.

Dr. James Lindauer, D.C.

The Village at Waugh Chapel: 2654 Brandermill Blvd., Gambrills, MD 21054

PHONE: 410-721-2222 FAX: 410-721-2437

Maryland Science and Technology Center: 17000 Science Dr., Ste 204, Bowie, MD 20715

PHONE: 301-262-4545 FAX: 301-262-7922