

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

What is CFS/ME?

CFS/ME is a condition characterised by overwhelming fatigue that is not improved by rest and cannot be explained by an underlying medical condition

Patients:

Have you experienced the following symptoms for four or more consecutive months?

Common symptoms:

- Substantial impairment in short-term memory or concentration
- Sore throat
- Tender lymph nodes
- Muscle pain
- Multi-joint pain without swelling or redness
- Headaches
- Unrefreshing sleep
- Post-exertional malaise (increase in above symptoms lasting more than 24 hours after physical or cognitive activity)

GP:

Patient has been fatigued for 4-plus months and has at least 4 of the 8 common symptoms

Rule out other possible causes of fatigue. Rule out other conditions with similar symptoms - e.g:

- Endocrine disorders
- Rheumatological conditions
- Malignancy
- Infectious diseases
- Kidney disease
- Coeliac disease
- Primary sleep disorders
- Primary psychiatric or psychological disorders

How is CFS/ME treated?

GP support

- Symptom management
- Medication

Specialist CFS/ME service intervention

- Self-management approach
- Understanding / accepting diagnosis
- Stabilising daily routines and physiological patterns
- Goal planning
- Coping with setbacks.

Further help

Self-help booklets; GP referral form

Visit www.cpft.nhs.uk/services/chronic-fatigue-syndrome-and-myalgic-encephalomyelitis.htm