

## Ticket to Enter: Degenerative Disorders Fact Sheet

Briefly define it, state the cause if known, name a few classic S/S you may see in a patient:

- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis:** Rapidly progressive, neurologic disorder with degeneration of upper and lower motor neurons that leads to progressive and eventually debilitating muscle weakness  
Cause: idiopathic, but some linked genes suggest inheritance  
S/Sx: weakness spreading to multiple muscles, progressive muscle weakness and atrophy, dysphagia, dysarthria, pain, sleep disorders, spasticity, drooling, constipation, reflux, respiratory difficulties
- Huntington's Disease:** Progressive, degenerative brain disorder that results in involuntary movements and mental deterioration  
Cause: genetic disorder, abnormal gene identified, with each pregnancy affected parent has 50% chance of passing gene to offspring  
S/Sx:
- Multiple Sclerosis:** Chronic, progressive, degenerative, disorder of the CNS with demyelination of nerve fibers  
Cause: unknown- research for viral, immune, genetic involvement  
S/Sx: fatigue, impaired movement, limbs feel weak/heavy, N/T, stiffness, gait problems, poor balance, distortion of red/green colors w vision, blindness in 1 eye, tinnitus, loss of hearing, dysarthria, dysphagia, bowel/bladder fx loss, paresthesia, pain, decreased ST memory, concentration, emotional stability
- Myasthenia Gravis:** Autoimmune disease characterized by muscle fatigue and weakness from inadequate Ach receptor stimulation due to ACh receptor antibodies that attack acetylcholine receptors  
Cause: idiopathic  
S/Sx: fluctuating weakness of skeletal muscles, muscles affected that move the eyes/eyelids/chew/swallow/speak/breathe, trunk/shoulder/limb/neck weakness
- Parkinson's Disease:** Chronic, progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by slowness in the initiation and execution of movement, increased muscle tone, tremor at rest, and gait disturbance  
Cause: Cause unknown but thought to be due to: Lack of dopamine in the brain due to degeneration of dopamine producing neurons causing an imbalance of dopamine and acetylcholine  
S/Sx: gradual onset, tremors, rigidity, akinesia, postural instability, depression, anxiety, apathy, pain, fatigue, short term memory loss, sweating, flushing, orthostatic hypotension, urinary retention, constipation, sleep disorders, w/ progression dementia, hallucinations or psychosis can occur