

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:

1. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis-

- Rapidly progressive, neurologic disorder with degeneration of upper and lower motor neurons
- Effects both upper and lower motor neurons
- Upper motor neurons- degenerate and stop communicating which leads to spasticity of the muscles
- Lower motor neurons- can't produce or transport impulses from nerves which leads to flaccidity and atrophy of the muscles
- S/Sx: progressive muscle weakness and atrophy, dysphagia, dysarthria, pain, sleep disorders, spasticity, drooling, constipation, reflux, respiratory difficulties

2. Huntington's Disease

- Progressive brain disorder that results in involuntary movements and mental deterioration
- Genetic disorder, autosomal dominant disorder
- HD abnormal gene causes:
- A deficiency in the neurotransmitters GABA and Ach
- Excess dopamine availability in HD-
- Leads to symptoms that are opposite of Parkinson's
- S/Sx: chorea, mental cognitive/pysch decline, tics, grimacing, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing disorganized gait, bladder control lost

3. Multiple Sclerosis-

- Chronic, progressive, degenerative, disorder of the CNS with demyelination of nerve fibers
- Cause is unknown- research for viral, immune, genetic involvement
- Autoimmune response leads to chronic inflammation, myelin sheath damage by demyelination
- S/Sx: Fatigue-common, severe, disabling, Impaired Movement, visual disturbances, dysarthria, bowel/bladder dysfunction, sensory disturbances

4. 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 unknown
- S/Sx: Fluctuating weakness of skeletal muscles, can have weakness in other parts of body

5. 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 unknown
- 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: tremor, rigidity, akinesia, and postural instability, depression, anxiety, apathy, pain, fatigue, short term memory loss, sweating, flushing, orthostatic hypotension, urinary retention, constipation, sleep disorders