

Class Preparation: 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-

ALS is a nervous system disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord and causes a loss of muscle control, gets worse over time. Exact cause is unknown, some are inherited. Symptoms depend on which nerve cells are affected, might include muscle twitching and weakness in extremities, trouble swallowing or slurred speech, trouble walking.

2. Huntington's Disease

Progressive, degenerative brain disorder causing excessive involuntary movements and mental deterioration. Caused by an abnormal gene HTT, excess dopamine. Signs and symptoms include chorea (or involuntary or unpredictable muscle movements), facial tics, slurred speech, chewing/swallowing difficulties, bladder/bowel control lost, changes in mental status.

3. Multiple Sclerosis-

Chronic, progressive, degenerative damage to the myelin sheath along nerve cells axons. Affects brain and/or spinal cord. Autoimmune response leads to T-cells entering circulation and attacking to body which cause inflammation and demyelination of nerves. Cause unknown although autoimmune factors present. Signs/symptoms are severe fatigue, impaired movement, blindness, blurry vision, hearing difficulties, bowel/bladder dysfunction, sensory disturbances, depression, anger.

4. Myasthenia Gravis-

Autoimmune disorder characterized by fluctuating muscle weakness and ACH receptor antibodies which results in not enough ACH reaching receptors, then causes inability to stimulate normal muscle contractions. Cause is unknown. Signs/symptoms including muscle fatigue, feeling stronger in the AM, weaker in PM with improvement after rest.

5. Parkinson's Disease

Slowly progressive neurological movement disorder that slows initiation of movements, increased muscle tone, causes tremors and gait disturbances. Cause is unknown but is characterized by a degeneration of cells in midbrain that produce dopamine and a lack of dopamine thereafter. Signs and symptoms include tremors, rigidity, postural instability and akinesia (inability to perform a clinically perceivable movement), depression/anxiety, pain, fatigue, memory loss.