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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-

A neurodegenerative disorder that is rapidly progressing and affects the upper and lower motor neurons causing debilitating muscle weakness. The cause is unknown, but it may be r/t too much glutamate amino acid in the brain. S/Sx: dysphagia, dysarthria, pain, sleep disorders, worsening spasticity/hyperreflexia, drooling, constipation, reflux, difficulty breathing

2. Huntington's Disease-

A progressive, degenerative brain disorder that results in excessive involuntary choreiform and mental deterioration (cognitive and psychiatric effects). The cause is excess dopamine and an abnormal gene HTT. S/Sx: chorea, facial movements, chewing/swallowing difficulties, gait is disorganized, bladder/bowel control lost, mental status changes.

3. Multiple Sclerosis-

A chronic, progressive, degenerative disorder that causes myelin sheath damage, affects the brain and/or spinal cord, and nerve conduction issues are seen. The cause is unknown but autoimmune factors are present. S/Sx: severe fatigue, impaired movement, optic nerve damage, acoustic nerve damage, dysarthria and dysphagia, bowel/bladder dysfunction, and sensory disturbance.

4. Myasthenia Gravis-

An autoimmune disorder causing fluctuating muscle weakness and ACH receptor antibodies. The cause is antibodies are produced against ACH receptors, causing not enough ACH reaching the receptors which then causes an inability to stimulate normal muscle contractions; however, the exact cause is unknown. S/Sx: motor effects only, muscle fatigue, muscle weakness in eyelids, mouth, facial muscles, and trunk, limbs, neck, hep, and shoulders.

5. Parkinson's Disease

A slowly progressive neurologic movement disorder whereby initiation of movements slows down, muscle tone increases, tremors are present at rest, and gait is disturbed. The cause is unknown but r/t lack of dopamine in the brain, degeneration of cells in midbrain that produces dopamine, and genetic/environment factors. S/Sx: cardinal signs: tremor, rigidity, akinesia (bradykinesia), and postural instability.