

Multifocal Motor Neuropathy

What is Multifocal Motor Neuropathy (MMN)?

MMN is a disorder that causes muscle weakness, mainly in the hands. In some people, other muscles are also affected.

Most people develop MMN between 35 and 70 years of age. MMN affects men more often than women.

MMN is progressive, which means symptoms gradually worsen over time.

There is no cure for MMN, but supportive treatment can help you manage the symptoms.

What are the symptoms of MMN?

The symptoms include:

- Muscle weakness in the hands
- Muscle wasting (loss of muscle)
- Muscle cramping
- Twitching of the muscles (called fasciculations)

Symptoms usually begin in one hand or arm and follow the path of one or two nerves. Over time, other nerves may become involved in the arms or legs. Eventually, muscles shrink due to nerve damage.

What causes MMN?

The cause of MMN is not clear. Some research suggests that MMN may be due to problems with the immune system. People with MMN have certain antibodies (proteins in the blood) that attack nerve fibres. This leads to nerve damage, then muscle weakness and atrophy (shrinkage).

How do you know I have MMN?

Your doctor or specialist can tell if you have MMN from:

- Talking to you about your symptoms and past medical history.
- A physical exam to see how well your muscles and nerves are working.
- Reviewing the results of tests.

Tests for Multifocal Motor Neuropathy include:

- Nerve conduction studies and Electromyography. These tests measure the electrical activity in your muscles and nerves. Nerves are stimulated with an electrical impulse and the response in the muscles is observed.

With MMN, the electrical impulse does not travel all the way down the nerve. It is blocked because of the damage to the nerve. With this 'conduction block', there is little or no response in the muscle.

- Blood tests to check for the antibodies that are associated with MMN.

How is MMN treated?

Treatment for MMN varies. People with mild symptoms may not need any treatment. Others may need immunosuppressive treatment or Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIg) therapy. You will work closely with the team care team to make a treatment plan that best meets your needs.

Immunosuppressant Drugs

- These medications can help lower your body's immune system, which prevents it from attacking its own healthy tissues.

Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIg) Therapy

- IVIg is an infusion of 'good' antibodies (proteins) through an IV line that is generally tolerated well. It can help increase your overall strength and help you to function better. You may feel stronger within 3 to 6 weeks of starting IVIg treatment.
- IVIg must be given at the hospital and repeated every 2 to 6 weeks.

If you have questions about Multifocal Motor Neuropathy or your care, please speak with your health care team at the Neuromuscular Clinic.

905-521-7933