

Patient Information about Myasthenia Gravis

<http://www.neurologychannel.com/patient-information-myasthenia-gravis/index.shtml>

Myasthenia gravis (MG) is a chronic disorder that causes progressive muscle weakness. Symptoms of myasthenia gravis vary in severity, may come and go, and often worsen with activity and improve with rest. Signs of the disorder include difficulty speaking and/or swallowing, vision problems, and muscle weakness that affects the neck, arms, legs, trunk, and in some cases, the eyes.

Myasthenia gravis is caused by an interruption in the transmission of signals between nerves and muscles. Although the relationship is not completely understood, the thymus gland plays a role in the development of myasthenia gravis. Treatment for the condition often involves medication, plasmapheresis, and surgery to remove the thymus.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., neurologist) about myasthenia gravis. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and bring it with you to your next doctor appointment. It is important for people who have myasthenia gravis to work with their doctors to develop an effective treatment plan and help prevent MG complications.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Myasthenia Gravis

- What is the underlying cause for myasthenia gravis?
- Why do you suspect that I have myasthenia gravis?
- What other conditions might be causing my symptoms?
- What type of diagnostic tests will be performed to confirm or rule out myasthenia gravis?
- What do these tests involve?
- Can you explain the Tensilon test to me?
- Are there any risks associated with this test? If so, what are these risks?
- How should I prepare for these exams and laboratory tests?
- Should I call for the test results or will someone contact me?
Telephone number to call:
- Are there any complications associated with myasthenia gravis? If so, what are the signs of these complications?

- What should I do if my symptoms worsen or I develop complications?
Telephone number to call:
- What types of medical specialists will be part of my health care team?
- How do I contact these physicians and other medical providers?
Specialists: **Telephone numbers:**
- What are the treatment options for myasthenia gravis?
- What type of treatment(s) do you recommend?
- Why do you recommend this treatment?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of this myasthenia gravis treatment?
- How will my condition be monitored during treatment?
- Will medications be prescribed to treat my condition? Why or why not?
- How will these medicines be administered?
- What are the common side effects associated with these drugs?
- What should I do if I experience severe side effects?
Telephone number to call:
- Might I require additional treatments, such as immunosuppressant drugs and/or plasmapheresis? If so, what do these treatments involve?
- Do you recommend that I undergo thymectomy? Why or why not?
- Why might this surgery be beneficial for people who have myasthenia gravis?
- What does thymectomy involve?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications associated with surgery to remove the thymus gland?

- What is my expected prognosis?
- Can you recommend a local or online support group for people with myasthenia gravis?
- Can you recommend any resources for additional information about myasthenia gravis?
- Next appointment:** Date: Time:

Notes/Additional Information