

# Living with Guillain-Barre Syndrome

Guillain-Barre Syndrome is a rare condition more common in adults and males, but people of all ages can be affected.

## 1 Introduction

Guillain-Barre is a rare disorder in which the nerves are attacked by immune cells, causing weakness and tingling in the arms and legs. These sensations can spread rapidly and could eventually lead to paralysis. The exact cause of the syndrome is unknown, and researchers don't understand why it affects some people and not others.

## 2 Symptoms

Guillain-Barre syndrome normally starts with tingling and weakness in your feet and legs, then spreads to your upper body. Some more signs and symptoms include:

- A pins and needle sensation in the fingers, toes, ankles, or wrists
- Unsteady walking or inability to walk
- Difficulty with facial movements
- Severe pain that may feel achy, shooting, or cramp-like and may be worse at night
- Rapid heart rate, low or high blood pressure
- Difficulty breathing

## 3 Types

Guillain-Barre syndrome has many forms, including:

- **Acute inflammatory demyelinating polyradiculoneuropathy (AIDP)** is the most common form in North America, where muscle weakness starts in the lower part of your body and spreads upward.
- **Miller-Fisher syndrome (MFS)** is where paralysis starts in the eyes and is less common in the U.S.
- **Acute motor axonal neuropathy (AMAN) and acute motor-sensory neuropathy (AMSAN)** are also less common in the U.S.

## 4 Treatments

There is currently no known cure for the syndrome, and it can be difficult to diagnose in its earlier stages. However, plasma exchange (plasmapheresis) and immunoglobulin therapy are two types of treatments that can speed recovery from symptoms and reduce the severity of the illness. Physical therapy is also recommended before and during recovery. While Guillain-Barre can be a devastating disorder because it could potentially lead to paralysis, most people are able to reduce the severity of the illness.

## Did you know?

Most people fully recover from symptoms in even the most severe cases of Guillain-Barre syndrome.

For more information on Guillain-Barre syndrome and supportive resources, please visit [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org)

## References:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/guillain-barre-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20362793>

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/guillain-barre-syndrome>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/guillain-barr%C3%A9-syndrome>