

## What Exactly Is Neuropathy?

Complete Neuropathy Data You Can Use



Peripheral neuropathy is a condition caused by nerve damage, sometimes as a consequence of diabetes. It is considered a chronic condition and can when the body isn't able to use insulin properly. Neuropathy can form anywhere but is most likely to affect nerves running through the limbs, hands and feet.

Approximately 20 million Americans suffer from some form of peripheral neuropathy, and 65% have diabetes. Women tend to have 50% increased risk for the painful symptoms associated with neuropathy, a BMI (Body Mass Index) greater than 24 heightens your risk for complications in general and increases your risk of acquiring diabetes. More than 60% of all non-traumatic lower-limb amputations performed in the US are done on people suffering from the effects of peripheral neuropathy.

Neuropathy causes a good amount of pain, digestive issues, problems with the heart and blood vessels, the inability to go about life normally, and even death if major organs are affected badly enough. There is no known "cure" for peripheral neuropathy, only ways to manage it and stop progression, naturally. Many diabetics develop complications such as neuropathy. In fact, up to 60 percent to 70 percent of all diabetics experience some form of neuropathy. For others, only mild symptoms develop from nerve damage, such as tingling or numbness in the limbs.

### Symptoms of Peripheral Neuropathy

General symptoms of neuropathy can include:

- Low blood sugar, shakiness, sweating, and a faster heart rate
- Muscle weakness and atrophy
- Skin sensitivity (or lack of) to touch
- Digestive problems, bloated stomach, loss of appetite
- Frequent urination
- Lessened balance, dizziness and fainting
- Night sweats, changes in perspiration
- Cramps, pain, tingling or numbness, especially in hands, feet, legs

Symptoms can vary depending on which nerves are damaged: motor, sensory, or autonomic.

Motor nerves control voluntary movement of muscles such as those used for walking, grasping things, or talking, so muscle weakness, muscle twitches and weak reflexes occurs as a result.

Sensory nerves register feelings on the surface of the body, such as a cut or something touching the skin. The complexity of the sensory nerves can mean a greater variety of symptoms. Depending on the size of the sensory fibers, there is an overall decrease in sensation, to the extent of the damage. With larger sensory fibers, this can mean that one feels their hands or feet are covered with gloves or socks when they're not. Decrease in reflexes can mean impairment in balancing complex movements of the body such as walking, dressing or other normal and routine activities. If the sensory fibers affected are small, temperature changes and other surface feelings deteriorate to where one doesn't feel a cut or infection, which can be a serious problem if these injuries are left untreated. Over time, sensory neuropathy may lead to changes in the skin, hair, as well as to joint and bone damage.

Autonomic nerve damage symptoms are even more complex and varying because the autonomic nerves of the peripheral nervous system are tied to nearly every organ in the body. These symptoms can include: intolerance to heat and inability to sweat normally, bladder control issues, and issues with blood pressure control. For example, the blood pressure change that can happen when a seated person stands suddenly can cause dizziness, lightheadedness, or even fainting. One can also experience gastrointestinal issues such as constipation, diarrhea or incontinence. Swallowing can also become difficult.

Because of the unwanted, and sometimes unexpected or unexplained symptoms, the quality of life and one's emotional well-being can be strained and challenging for one to achieve. Because some of the symptoms can so often occur at night, including even the pain caused by a sheet or blanket over the body, quality of sleep is lessened, which comes with its own consequences. For example, some may experience pain from bed sheets draped lightly over the body.

### **Causes of Neuropathy and its link to other disorders**

Peripheral neuropathy can be inherited or acquired through diseases such as diabetes, metabolic and endocrine disorders, small vessel disease, autoimmune diseases, kidney disorders, cancers, neuromas (benign tumors caused by overgrowth of nerve tissue due to an injury), or infections. Physical injury can cause nerve injury and, eventually, peripheral neuropathy. Sudden trauma from sports injuries, car accidents or surgical procedures can sometimes cause instant damage to nerves. Repeated stress to

nerves can cause a compression-type of injury, where accumulation causes irritation to muscles, tendons or ligaments, causing inflammation. Carpal tunnel syndrome is an example of this.

People that have diabetes have issues regulating their blood sugar levels, and complications from uncontrolled blood sugar can cause nerve damage. Having diabetes for a long period of time increases the risk of nerve damage, as does being overweight, eating a poor diet, smoking, being sedentary, consuming high amounts of fat.

Peripheral neuropathy is a very problematic danger to have, and thankfully many people are able to control it by regulating their blood sugar levels, and focusing on a healthy diet and lifestyle.

## Natural Remedies

Managing blood sugar levels. Eating a healthy, balanced diet, exercising and having your blood sugar levels checked regularly will really help in avoiding nerve damage complications, especially if you suffer from diabetes.

Eat and drink healthy. Whole fruits and vegetables including sprouted beans, wild-caught fish, lean proteins like grass-fed beef, pasture-raised poultry, cage-free eggs and healthy fats such as olive and coconut oil, nuts, and avocado will all go a long way to provide the nutrients and fiber that will help your body maintain the healthiest state possible. Drinking water and herbal tea, keeping away from processed foods, regulating sugar intake and limiting (or eliminating) fried foods will contribute too.

Exercise and physical therapy. Maintaining a healthy weight through exercise will help control blood sugar and high blood pressure, and improve strength and range of motion, in addition to having the potential to significantly reduce pain and accompanying symptoms of neuropathy. Physical therapy can work to improve mobility and strength, making daily tasks easier to manage.

Keep toxins at bay. Kidney issues do often develop in those with neuropathy, so keeping away from toxins will ensure the kidneys will not be overworked with fending off toxic invaders. Smokers are more likely to develop nerve damage as well, not to mention the greater risk of heart attack or stroke, so quitting will go a long way to fighting off this pesky condition if you are smoker.

Lower pain naturally. Using natural remedies like evening primrose oil, alpha lipoic acid, chromium, omega-3, B12, cinnamon and essential oils like peppermint and lavender can help lessen pain, especially when paired with the other natural treatments suggested here.

Monitor symptoms closely. Paying attention to your body and making sure you are noting any changes in your skin, and keeping your skin, feet and toes clean will keep you ahead of the curve with regards to keeping your symptoms in check. When cleaning, make sure to pay special attention to any areas of the body that hold moisture, or areas where skin tends to fold. Wear clean clothes and keep the body cool in hot weather to keep infection at bay.

De-stress. It's easier to manage anything when you have found some proven ways to relax and de-stress. Some find a relaxing hobby, others spend time outdoors in nature, and still others use religion or counselling to relax. Finding what works for you is what matters. If you can stay as calm as possible, you'll best be able to handle anything that comes your way.

Dr. X has been working in the field of neuropathy, with success, for over 18 years. He will help you address and determine the best course of action for the greatest benefit for your situation. Call today, mention this blog, and receive a 20% discount on your first visit.

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