

Fast Facts

Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS)

- Also known as Willis-Ekbom disease
- Causes a person to have an uncontrollable urge to move their legs because of uncomfortable sensations in them
 - Exact cause for this is unknown
- Thought to be related to an imbalance of dopamine in the brain, which regulates messages that control muscle movement
 - Symptoms usually start after you've been sitting or lying down for a period of time
 - Happens most often in the evening hours or when trying to go to sleep
 - Moving your legs can make the sensations go away temporarily
- Symptoms can fluctuate in severity and sometimes go away for a while before coming back
 - More common as you age and women are more likely than men to get it
 - Can be hereditary, especially if it starts before the age of 40
- If pregnant or experiencing hormonal changes, it can temporarily make your symptoms worse

| <i>Symptoms</i> | <i>Treatment</i> | <i>Prevention</i> |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Uncontrollable urge to move legs due to uncomfortable sensations <i>Sensations:</i> -Crawling -Creeping -Pulling -Throbbing -Aching -Itching -Electric -Some people have difficulty explaining the precise feeling -Never defined as muscle cramping or numbness | -Treat underlying conditions -Medications to decrease sensations <i>Lifestyle Changes:</i> -Soak in a warm bath or massage legs to relax the muscles -Perform gentle stretching exercises when you wake up and before you go to bed -Use heat or cold packs (you can also try alternating the two) -Have good sleeping habits like sleeping in a quiet, cool environment, going to bed/getting up at the same time each day, and getting seven hours of sleep each night -Keep a sleep diary -Get regular, moderate exercise (just don't overdo it or workout too late in the day) -Avoid caffeine -Wear a specially designed foot wrap -Don't resist the urge to move -Get up and walk around frequently -Tell your family, friends, and co-workers about your condition so they understand why you need to move around | -No options currently |

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