

Fast Facts

Myasthenia Gravis

- Disorder that causes weakening and rapid fatigue in muscles that you voluntarily control
- Occurs as the result of a breakdown in the communication of your nerves and muscles
- Normally, nerves “speak” to muscles by releasing chemicals, neurotransmitters, which fit into specific receptor sites
- For those with the condition, their immune system creates antibodies that destroy or block the receptor sites for a particular neurotransmitter, usually acetylcholine
- Antibodies can inhibit the function of proteins, like muscle-specific receptor tyrosine kinase
 - In either case, it results in the muscles receiving fewer nerve signals
- Thymus gland, which resides in the upper part of the chest beneath the breastbone, is thought to trigger or maintain the production of the antibodies that impede acetylcholine
 - Can be the result of a tumor (thymoma); typically, they aren’t cancerous
- Some individuals don’t have antibodies against acetylcholine or muscle-specific receptor tyrosine kinase. So, it’s called antibody-negative myasthenia gravis, even though they do have antibodies against another protein, lipoprotein-related protein 4
- Can occur in anyone, but it’s more common in women under 40 and men over 60

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Muscle weakness -Drooping of one or both eyelids -Double vision -Impaired speech -Difficulty swallowing -Difficulty chewing -Changes in facial expressions -Difficulty keeping head up, using arms, or walking 	<p><i>Cholinesterase Inhibitors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pyridostigmine -Neostigmine <p><i>Corticosteroids:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prednisone <p><i>Immunosuppressants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Azathioprine -Mycophenolate mofetil -Cyclosporine -Methotrexate -Tacrolimus <p><i>Intravenous (IV) Therapies:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Plasmapheresis -Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) -Monoclonal antibody treatments (rituximab or eculizumab) <p><i>Surgery:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Remove thymus gland <p><i>Lifestyle Changes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use electric appliances -Plan activities for when you’re the strongest -Wear an eye patch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -None at this time

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Create a safe environment-Reduce stress-Ask for help when needed-Maintain a support network	
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