



Myasthenia Gravis INFORMATION CARD

I have a rare
disease that is
with me all the time

MYASTHENIA GRAVIS

It is hard when . . .

others do not know about or understand how Myasthenia works. Taking a moment to read this sheet helps myasthenics to feel safer and more understood.

Myasthenia Gravis . . .

is a neurological autoimmune condition affecting transmission at the neuromuscular junction. Unwanted antibodies are made in varying amounts. These antibodies can affect different nerve junctions at different times and in ranging degrees. As a consequence, muscles fatigue quickly as less neurons are stimulated, leaving limited muscle fibres available to do the work.

In summary, **sufferers fatigue**. It is hard to imagine just how tired one can feel having this condition. With this comes 'brain fog'. Therefore, we may not respond quickly or fully process what is being said. Decision-making can be daunting.

What body parts can be affected?

- Eyesight may struggle and suffer from blurring and double vision;
- Eyelids (one or both) may droop or be hard to open;
- The head can be heavy to hold up and arms and legs may not want to provide sufficient support. People can wobble, even fall;
- Holding arms up to brush hair becomes strenuous.
- Worse still, when facial muscles are weak, words can slur, chewing and swallowing can fail and choking is a greater risk.
- When the chest muscles fatigue, breathing becomes less effective and may fail altogether. This is known as a Myasthenic Crisis and is very serious indeed.

Medication.

Keeping medications handy is crucial, as the timing for taking these is critical and may be variable.

- Medications must be taken on time, with very complex drug regimes running throughout 24 hours are common;
- Many drugs are not suitable for myasthenics, as they interfere with the neuromuscular junction;
- Before taking something new, checking for contraindications to Myasthenia Gravis must be undertaken;
- Mestinon, a common drug used for MG, must be used with care and be taken at the correct intervals and the prescribed dosages. Too much can be dangerous.

Helping.

You can make a big difference to a person with MG by:

- listening to concerns;
- taking comments seriously;
- remembering to allow lots of time for rest;
- doing your best to understand this chronic medical condition.

More information about this condition can be found at www.mgaq.org.au under 'resources'.

A full information booklet can be found here. It is helpful to patients, families, friends and medical staff. The **Myasthenia Gravis Association of Qld. Inc.** is happy to provide hard copies upon request.



Myasthenia Gravis Association of Queensland

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