

# Nervous System Diseases and Disorders

The following are diseases and disorders of the nervous system:

## Neuritis

Inflammation of one or more peripheral nerves (may be in separate areas). It may be due to a physical trauma, infection, thiamine deficiency or various drugs and other poisons. It may also be due to a build up of lactic acid or urea around the nerve sheath. Brachial neuritis is similar to sciatica but occurs in the arm.

## Neuralgia

Attacks of pain along the entire course or branch of a peripheral nerve fibre. This may be due to inflammation, irritation or exposure of the nerve through trauma.

## Sciatica

This is a special example of neuritis found in the sciatic nerve or one of its branches. The sciatic nerve is the longest in the body. It is characterised by relatively severe pain from the back through to the toes. It is most common due to a slipped (herniated) disc, but may be due to compressed discs and injuries, including over exertion. It may also be associated with vitamin deficiencies, gout or diabetes melitus.

## Bell's Palsy

Facial paralysis, caused by injury to or infection of the facial nerve, which subsequently becomes inflamed as it passes through the forearm just below the ear. Effectively facial neuritis.

## Parkinson's Disease

Progressive disease caused by damage to the basal ganglia of the brain, resulting in loss of neuro-transmitter (dopamine). It tends to occur at middle life.

Symptoms are tremor and rigidity in muscles and difficulty and slowness with voluntary movements. The brain is unaffected although it does appear that way.

## Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME)

Post-viral syndrome. It leads to usually long term, extreme fatigue, aches and pains, headaches and dizziness.

## Motor Neurone Disease

A rare progressive disorder in which the body's motor neurones gradually deteriorate structurally and functionally.

## **Cerebral Palsey**

Damage to the brain caused as a pre-natal defect, during birth, foetal life or infancy. Leads to a lack of motor control.

## **Muscular Sclerosis**

Progressive destruction of the myelin sheaths in the CNS. This results in short circuiting conduction pathways.

Symptoms are muscular weakness, loss of muscular co-ordination, problems with skin sensation, speech and vision.

## **Polyomyelitis**

Viral infection producing fever, headache, stiff neck and back, deep muscle pain and weakness and a loss of certain somatic reflexes. In its severe form, there is destruction of some motor nerves leading to withering and sometimes paralysis.