

SYMPTOMS OF M.E./CFS The percentages shown below represent the percentage of M.E. patients displaying that particular symptom. Dr Bell calls his percentages “a rough guess”.

**Dr Charles Shjpherd
“Living with M.E.”**

Muscle fatigue	100%
Emotional lability	98%
- includes frustration, elation and depression	
Muscle pain	80%
- especially limbs, shoulder, girdle, spine	
Cognitive disturbance	77%
- memory, concentration, dyslexia	
Headaches	74%
Giddiness & balance problems ..	72%
Circulation & temperature	69%
control - night sweats, 'hot & cold' fluctuations	
Hearing disturbances	69%
- noise sensitivity, deafness, noises in ears - tinnitus	
Reversal of sleep rhythm	64%
Visual disturbances	62%
- blurring, double vision, dislike of bright lights, involuntary eyeball movements	
Pins and needles, numbness	61%
and increased awareness of sensation	
Intercostal myalgia/weakness ..	59%
- ie between ribs	
Muscle twitching and spasm	57%
Clumsiness	56%
Gastro-intestinal symptoms	49%
- nausea, bloating	
Bladder control problems	38%
Recurrent enlargement of lymph glands	36%
Joint pain	28%
Increased pulse rate	21%
Recurrent conjunctivitis	16%
Inflammation of testicles	13%
or prostate gland - of young males	
Seronegative polyarthritis	10%
Vasculatic skin lesions	10%

The above were the symptoms and signs in 420 patients with M.E.

The findings were published in the Postgraduate Medical Journal in 1990 and are reproduced on page 84 of Dr Shepherd's book

**Dr Anne MacIntyre
“M.E. - How to Live with It”**

Made worse by exercise	100%
Exhaustion & severe malaise	85%
Muscle weakness after using muscle, - lasting days	
Muscle pain, - commonest in back of shoulders, upper arms and thighs	
Blurring of Vision - - sometimes actual double vision	
Sensation of pins and needles, or numbness	
Loss of concentration	
Headache	
Muscle twitching	
Speech difficulties - using the wrong words	
Poor circulation - cold hands and feet	
Pain in the back of neck	
Abnormal sweating - often with a sour smell	
Memory impairment - especially recent events	
Breathing difficulty - sensation of lack of air	
Extreme sensitivity to sound - hyperacusis	
Noises in ear - tinnitus	
Sleep disturbance	
Palpitations and/or racing heartbeat	
Difficulty standing for any time - classic symptom of M.E.	
Vivid or bad dreams	
Joint pains - which may move from joint to joint	
Feeling 'spaced-out', disorientated	
Depression	
Loss of interest in sex	
Nausea	
Chest pains	
Emotional lability - crying easily, rapid mood change	
Constipation or diarrhoea	
Recurrent sore throats	
Enlarged or painful lymph glands	
Altered sense of taste and / or smell	
Difficulty with balance and / or true vertigo	
Difficulty walking - or walking having to be limited to very short distances	
Panic attacks	
Poor temperature control	
Poor co-ordination - clumsiness	
Pallor when ill - quite common	
Poor bladder control	
Skin very sensitive to touch	
Spontaneous bruising, skin rashes	
Great thirst	

above is from pages 27 & 28 of Dr MacIntyre's book

Dr David Bell - “The Disease of a Thousand Names”

<u>Fatigue or exhaustion</u>	100%
<u>Headache</u>	90%
Lack of restful sleep	90%
<u>Malaise</u>	80%
Short term memory loss	80%
Blurring of vision	80%
Sensitivity to bright lights	80%
Muscle pain	75%
Light headedness	75%
Difficulty concentrating	70%
Joint Pain	65%
Depression	65%
Insomnia	65%
Fever - or sensation of fever	65%
<u>Abdominal pain</u>	60%
Bloating	60%
Scratchiness in eyes	60%
Extremities numb &/or tingling ..	60%
Allergies	60%
Palpitations	55%
<u>Lymph node pain</u>	50%
<u>Sore Throat</u>	50%
Diarrhoea	50%
Night sweats	50%
Constipation	40%
Fainting spells	40%
Weight gain	40%
Flushing rash in face & cheeks ..	40%
Pressure at base of skull	30%
Muscle weakness	30%
Balance disturbance	30%
Panic attacks	30%
Eye pain	30%
'Floaters' - dark spot in vision ...	30%
Dizziness	30%
Clumsiness	30%
Chills	30%
Shortness of breath	30%
Bitter or metallic taste	25%
Chemical sensitivities	25%
Easy bruising	25%
Ear ache	20%
Hearing changes	20%
Swelling of extremities or eyelids	20%
Burning on urination	20%
Sexual dysfunction	20%
Hair loss	20%
Double vision	10%
Weight loss	10%
Incontinence	10%

Pages 4 & 5 of Dr Bell's book - underlined symptoms caused greatest discomfort.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (or encephalopathy) / chronic fatigue syndrome: diagnosis and management: NICE guideline [NG206], Published: 29 October 2021.

The following is an extract from ME/CFS NICE (National Institute for Care Excellence) Guideline:[NG206] (<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng206/chapter/Recommendations#suspecting-mecfs>).

Awareness of ME/CFS and its impact

1.2 Suspecting ME/CFS.

1.2.1 Explain to people presenting with possible symptoms of ME/CFS that there currently is no diagnostic test for ME/CFS and it is recognised on clinical grounds alone.

1.2.2 Suspect ME/CFS if:

- the person has had all of the persistent symptoms in box 2 for a minimum of 6 weeks in adults and 4 weeks in [children and young people](#) **and**
- the person's ability to engage in occupational, educational, social, or personal activities is significantly reduced from pre-illness levels **and**
- symptoms are not explained by another condition.

Box 2 Symptoms for suspecting ME/CFS

1.2 Suspecting ME/CFS

All of these symptoms should be present:

- Debilitating [fatigue](#) that is worsened by [activity](#), is not caused by excessive cognitive, physical, emotional or social exertion, and is not significantly relieved by rest.
- [Post-exertional malaise](#) after [activity](#) in which the worsening of symptoms:
 - is often delayed in onset by hours or days
 - is disproportionate to the activity
 - has a prolonged recovery time that may last hours, days, weeks or longer.
- [Unrefreshing sleep](#) or sleep disturbance (or both), which may include:
 - feeling exhausted, feeling
 - flu-like and stiff on waking
 - broken or shallow sleep, altered sleep pattern or hypersomnia.
- Cognitive difficulties (sometimes described as 'brain fog'), which may include problems finding words or numbers, difficulty in speaking, slowed responsiveness, short-term memory problems, and difficulty concentrating or multitasking.

More info in Worcestershire M.E. Social Group's website blog "Symptoms of M.E./CFS", dated May 2024.