



MS Fatigue

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What is MS Fatigue ?

- 92% pwMS experience fatigue
- Two thirds pwMS consider this as one of their three most troubling symptoms.



People with MS (PwMS)

Fatigue leaves me feeling dulled and tired. I find it hard to concentrate and to absorb new ideas, and I'm often confused, searching for the right word, and forgetting things. My memory deteriorates dramatically when I get very tired.

Living with Fatigue- MS Trust



People with MS (PwMS)

The fatigue feels as if I had walked a mile without food and almost no water. I am not able to stand for long periods of time. Playing with my children is hard. I have no stamina

I find the biggest problem about fatigue is that others don't understand it. I think it would be easier for people to understand if you were wearing a plaster cast.

Living with Fatigue- MS Trust



Fatigue – a definition

- ‘Overwhelming sense of tiredness, lack of energy or feeling of exhaustion. It may exist independently of both depressed mood and weakness’

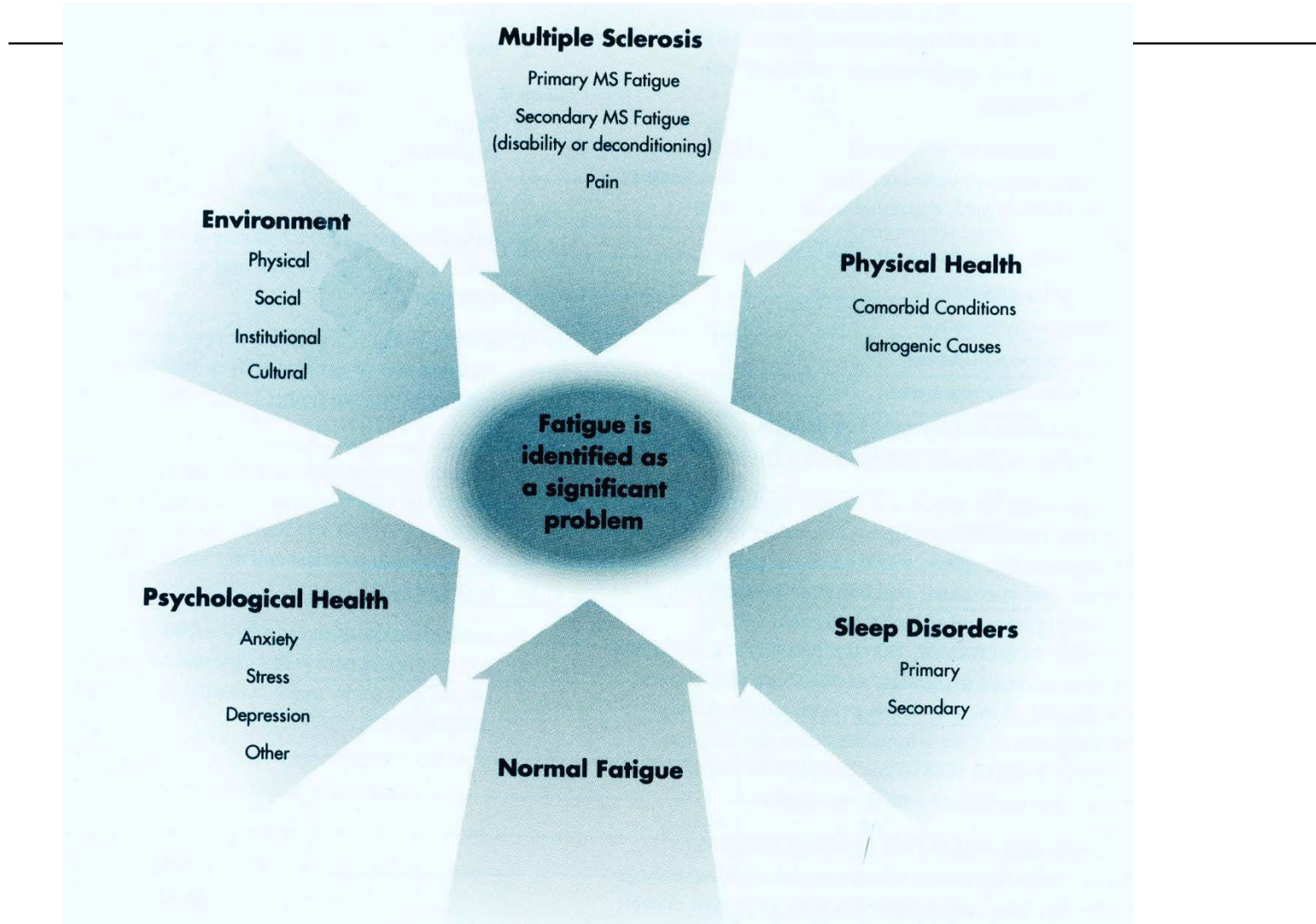
Krupp et al, 1988

- ‘A subjective lack of physical and/or mental energy that is perceived by the individual or caregiver to interfere with usual and desired activity’

MS Council 1998



Potential Causes & Effects of MS Fatigue

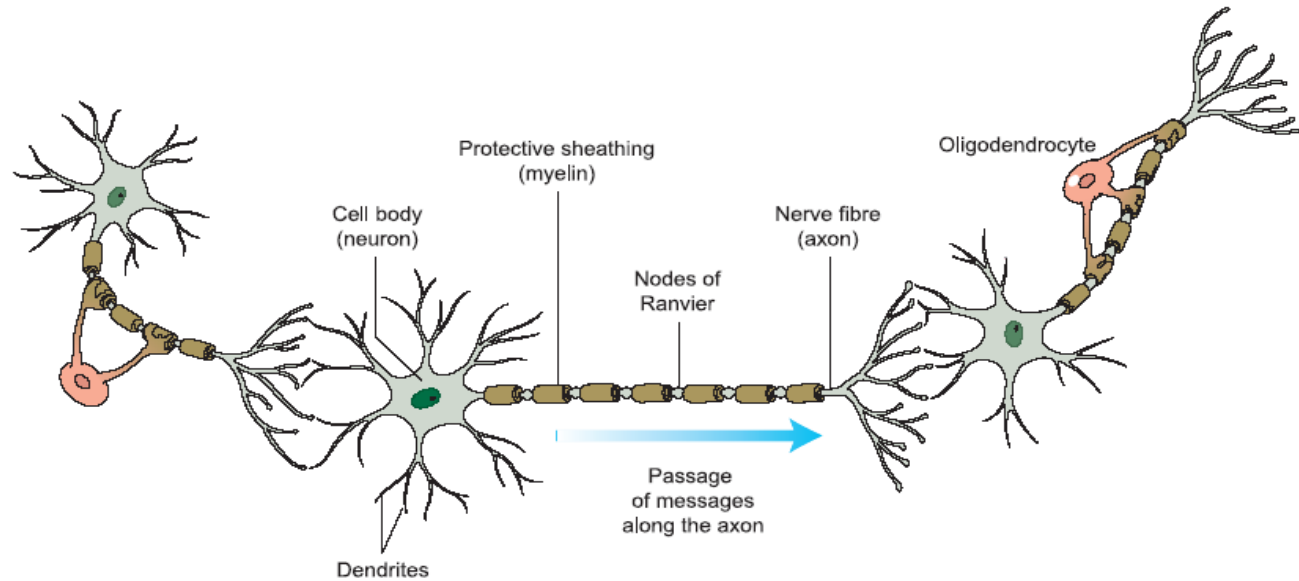




Primary Fatigue

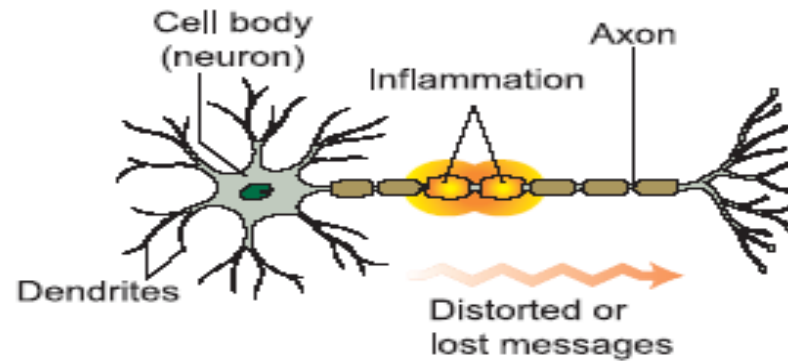
- Short Circuiting or Nerve Fibre Fatigue
- Lassitude / Central Fatigue
- Heat Sensitive Fatigue

Nerve Cell in the brain

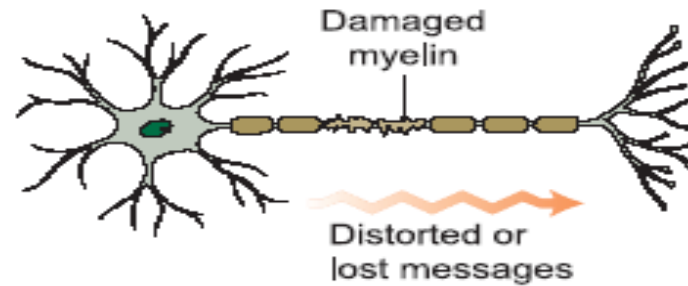


Nerve Cell

1. Axon with inflammation

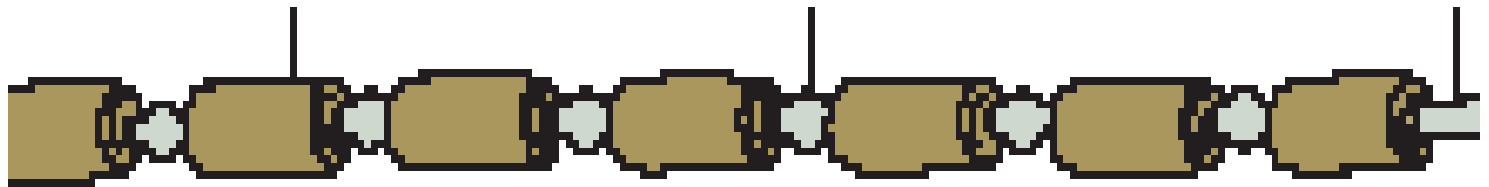


2. Axon with damaged myelin





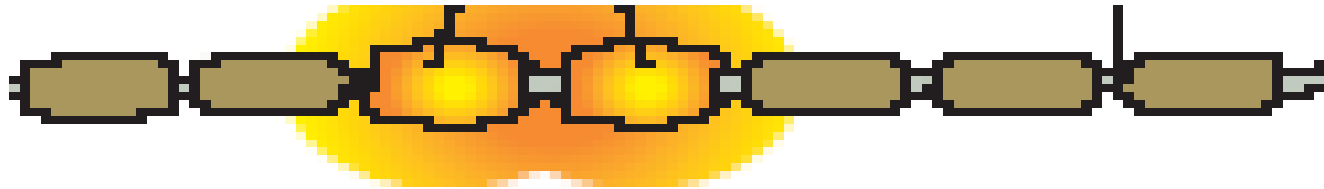
Neurotransmitters



Chemicals that carry messages across nerves



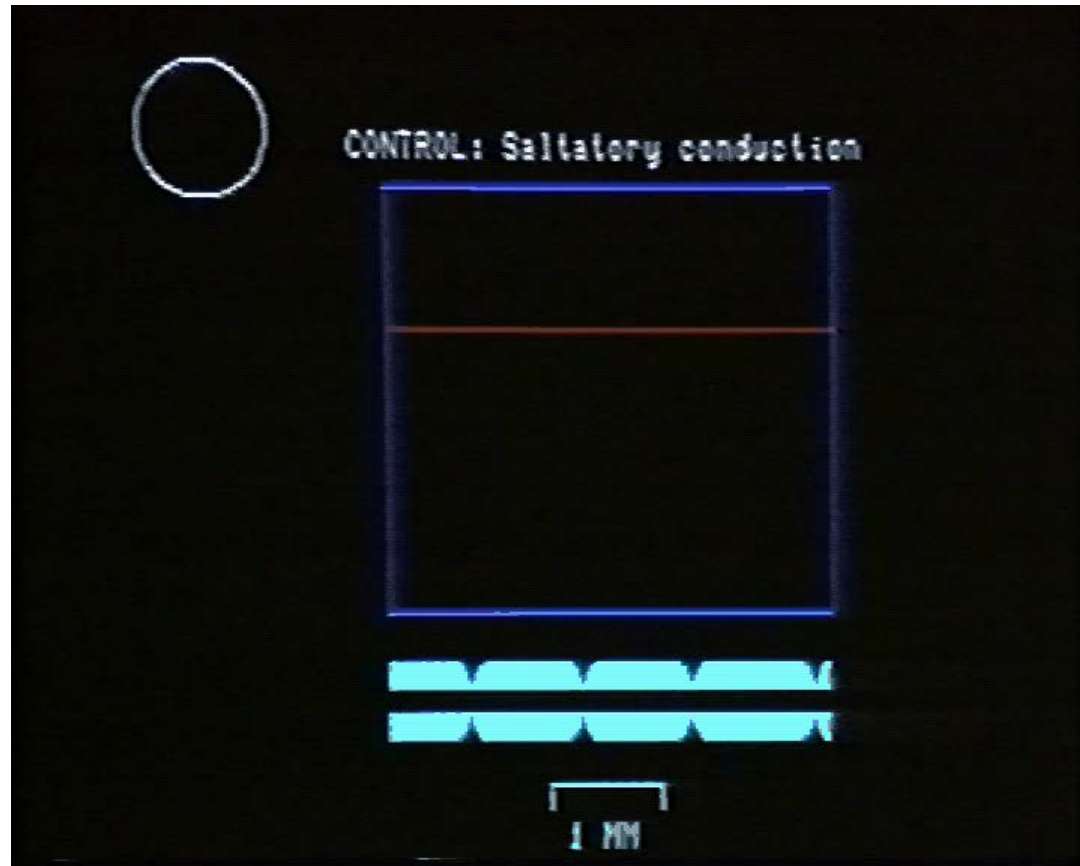
Neurotransmitters



Too much = conduction block



Demyelination : Effect on Conduction (H. Bostock)





Secondary Fatigue

- Sleep disturbance
- Infection
- Exertion
- Medication
- Depression
- Local Environment



Fatigue Management Therapies

1. Drug Treatments

2. Non Drug

○ Exercise:

- Resistance
- Mixed resistance/aerobic
- Supervised resistance and balance
- Moderate more than very high resistance
- Yoga
- Vestibular rehab

○ Psychological/ educational

- CBT
- Mindfulness
- Motivational interviewing
- Fatigue management



Drugs

**Speak to your
neurologist or GP**

Amantadine:

- An antiviral drug (used to treat influenza).
- Reduced fatigue in 20-40% pwMS (mild to moderate MS).
- Taken orally as tablets.
- Generally well tolerate
- Mild side effects include:
 - Constipation, nausea, anxiety and hyperactivity.
 - Insomnia or vivid dreams



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○ Fatigue management

**Ask for a
referral to
Physiotherapy**

**Ask for a
referral to
Psychology**



Fatigue Management

- Individual (3-4 sessions)
- Group (up to 6 sessions)

**Ask for a referral to
Occupational Therapy**



Fatigue Management Principles

- Rest and Relaxation
- Prioritisation of daily activities
- Planning and adapting daily activities
- Organisation
- Good Posture and positioning
- Healthy Balanced Diet
- Appropriate Exercise



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Take home points

- MS fatigue is common to the condition
- MS fatigue is unique to the individual
- There are many effective treatments

“So.....do something”