

Motor Neurone Disease Factsheet

Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a progressive disease that causes rapidly muscle deterioration when then nerve cells (neurons) fail to work normally.

The pattern of weakness and rate of progression varies from person to person. Some people can live a long time with MND, but the average life expectancy is 2-5 years from diagnosis.

MND is uncommon but not rare, with approximately 1400 people in Australia living with the disease.

Most people diagnosed are aged between 50 and 60, but MND can occur at any age.

Impact of the disease

As the disease process advances, people with MND become reliant on others for assistance with activities of daily living.

This can be physically and emotionally demanding for families and carers and people with MND can experience feelings of guilt, frustration and hopelessness.

Due to the rapid progression of the disease and the increasing series of losses, MND has a significant effect on the physical and emotional well being of the carer(s).

Physical effects

- Weakness, muscle wasting (first noticeable in the hands and feet)
- Difficulty swallowing, slurred speech
- Muscle twitching, cramps
- Emotional instability, depression
- Fatigue, pain and stiffness in joints, particularly shoulders
- Breathing difficulties

What remains unaffected?

- Intellect and memory
- Senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch
- Bowels and bladder

How can Just Better Care help?

People with Motor neurone disease gradually lose the use of their muscles and often may require assistance with personal care including toileting, bathing, dressing and grooming.

Some clients may receive support from our community support workers through a social support service.

Just Better Care is able to assist the individual and their family with accessing the appropriate aids and equipment required to assist in their independence.

References

[Better Health Channel](#)

[MND Australia](#)

[Neuroscience Research Australia](#)