

MYASTHENIA GRAVIS



WHAT IS IT?

- Chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disease
- Characterized by varying degrees of weakness of the skeletal muscles
- Hallmark sign: fluctuating fatigue and strength
- Hallmark sign: Weakness and fatigue increase during activity and gets better once they rest



ANATOMY



- Facial muscles
- Caused by error in nerve impulses to muscles
- The signals sent to the muscles are interrupted at the neuromuscular junction
- Antibodies block/destroy the receptors for acetylcholine at the neuromuscular junction which stops the muscle from being able to contract

SPECIAL TESTS

- Most testing is not done by PTs
- Keep an eye out for the previously mentioned hallmark signs
- Recognize the fluctuating strength and weakness



DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS



- Botulism
- Myopathies
- Decreased oculomotor abilities
- Any disorders that affect cranial nerves or the neuromuscular junction
- Systemic diseases: encephalopathy, sepsis

TREATMENT EXAMPLES

- Medically they are managed with corticosteroids or immunosuppressants→ know how these drugs affect patients during exercise
- Education
- Treat impairments as you see them
- Energy conservation techniques



ON THE NPTE



- It is not a super common condition, but remember the hallmark signs, especially the fluctuating strength and weakness

<https://www.aureusmedical.com/npteststudycast>

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