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IS IT MS?

There are numerous conditions which exhibit similar symptoms to Multiple Sclerosis. Some of these conditions are detailed below:

Hughes Syndrome

Hughes Syndrome is a blood disorder which in some ways mimics MS. Also known as 'sticky blood syndrome', Hughes is a common autoimmune disease that makes the blood more thick or 'sticky' and therefore more prone to clotting in the veins or arteries.

Symptoms include problems with:

- Mobility—difficulty in walking, tripping or dragging foot
- Double Vision
- Fatigue
- Balance
- Speech

Hughes Syndrome is easy to diagnose by simple blood tests and easy to treat with blood thinning medication such as warfarin or aspirin.

For more information about Hughes Syndrome you can contact the Hughes Syndrome foundation - www.hughes-syndrome.org

Lupus

Lupus is a disease of the immune system. Like MS, the immune system gets confused and begins to attack itself. With Lupus, however, this causes the blood stream to have too many antibodies, which leads to inflammation and damage in the joints, muscles and other areas.

Some of the symptoms of Lupus are similar to MS including:

- Extreme fatigue
- Weakness
- Joint and muscle aches and pains.

For more information about Lupus you can contact Lupus UK—www.lupusuk.org.uk

Transverse Myelitis (TM)

TM is a disease of the central nervous system. Like MS it involves inflammation, however in TM that inflammation is on the spinal cord.

Symptoms which are similar to those in MS include:

- Weakness
- Loss of sensations
- Bladder & Bowel problems



For more information about Transverse Myelitis you can contact the Transverse Myelitis Association —www.myelitis.org

Lyme Disease

Lyme Disease is an infection caused by bacteria from the deer tick.

It has many similar symptoms to MS including:

- Numbness and pins and needles
- Poor balance
- Difficulty walking
- Tremor
- Problems with Vision
- Fatigue

For more information about Lyme Disease you can contact the Lyme Disease Association—www.lymediseaseassociation.org

ME/CFS (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome)

Someone with ME/CFS is so fatigued that it impacts on their daily life. It is still unknown about the causes of ME/CFS although it sometimes follows an illness and some researchers believe that ME/CFS could be due to a reaction to common viruses.

Symptoms which are similar to MS include:

- Fatigue
- Chronic pain
- Cognitive problems

For more information about ME/CFS you can contact the ME association—www.meassociation.org.uk

Neuromyelitis Optica (NMO or Devics disease)

Neuromyelitis is very similar to MS in that it is a disease of the nervous system where there are episodes of Myelin damage. In NMO however this inflammation is almost always in the optic nerves and spinal cord.

The symptoms of NMO which mimic MS are:

- Vision problems (including temporary or permanent blindness in one or both eyes)
- Weakness of limbs
- Loss of sensation
- Bladder and Bowel problems

For more information about Neuromyelitis Optica you can contact the Transverse Myelitis Association —www.myelitis.org/nmo.htm