

Myasthenia Gravis Support Group of Central Texas

June 13, 2018

Linda Ann Joslin	Facilitator	Lee Higgins	MGFA Rep	Susan Larkin	Treasurer
Karen Davis	Web Mgr	Rachel Stewart	MGFA Rep	Keith Pflieger	Secretary

Members in Attendance:

Linda Ann Joslin	Larry Joslin	David Renfro	Rachel Higgins	Warden Rimel	Susan Larkin	Jim Larkin
Sergg Landa	Pauline Estes	Dan Bealko	Richard Armor			

Having a Relative with Myasthenia Gravis

By [Donald Blake](#) - April 6, 2018

Having a Relative with Myasthenia Gravis Increases Your Risk, Here's Why

If you have a close relative with [Myasthenia Gravis \(MG\)](#), you run a greater risk than the average population of being diagnosed with it. Additionally, you have a greater risk of developing several other autoimmune diseases if you have a first-degree relative with MG. First-degree relatives include your parents, siblings and children.

MG is a rare autoimmune disease affecting fewer than 200,000 patients annually in the United States. A patient with MG will experience muscle weakness in the arms and legs. Breathing may get more difficult as this neuromuscular disease attacks the muscles responsible for respiration. Symptoms of MG might include: drooping eye lid, shortness of breath, problems swallowing and weakness in the extremities, among other symptoms.

The genetic connection was reported in [this Taiwanese study](#) in the journal [Clinical Epidemiology](#). Typically, it was assumed MG development was a combination of genetic and environmental factors. There are not too many studies like this one, that attempt to quantify the genetic part of the equation without consideration of the environmental.

The researchers used a Taiwanese insurance database that included over 12 million individuals with 15,066 who had at least one first-degree family member with MG. 8,638 of the individuals were a parent-child relationship, 3,279 individuals had a child that was diagnosed, 3,134 had brothers or sisters that had MG and 26 cases were with twins.

The researchers concluded that having a family member with MG made a person a higher risk for development of the autoimmune neuromuscular disease.

“This nationwide family study confirms that an MG family history is associated with a high risk for the disease. Differential risk associated with different kinships suggests a strong genetic component in MG susceptibility.” — study authors

Patient's relatives were 7.78 times more likely to have MG than the general population and siblings had the highest likelihood of all the first-degree relatives were siblings who were more than 17.85 times more likely to have MG than the general population. From the data, authors also calculate MG susceptibility is 82.1% attributed to genetic factors and 17.9% to non-shared environmental factors.

By shedding light on the genetic component of Myasthenia Gravis, researchers hope that one day there will be more advanced MG risk studies as well as help in improving educating and advising patients of MG and their families.

28 steps to heart health

Dr. Ildiko Agoston, at UT Health Cardiology, advises everyone over 20-years-old to see a primary care physician for a blood pressure and weight check as well as a fasting glucose and cholesterol screening.

Knowing and tracking these numbers can alert your health provider to potential risks and ensure any concerns are immediately addressed. Dr. Agoston also shares these 28 heart-healthy tips to help you begin making healthier choices to prevent heart disease and optimize your longevity.

1. Go to your primary care physician for a complete physical and lab work every year. [Click here to find a UT Health Primary Care Physician.](#)
2. Reduce your salt intake. Avoid eating more than 2,300 milligrams a day.
3. Add 30 minutes of heart-pumping exercise into your day, every day
4. Don't smoke. UT Health can help. We offer free smoking cessation classes. [Learn more.](#)
5. ***Find the best method for lowering your stress, and use it as often as you are able. Exercise, meditate, dance or read to make time to decompress.***
6. If you have diabetes, manage it well. The [diabetes practice at UT Health San Antonio](#) is accepting new patients for diabetes management, nutrition evaluations and diabetes education.
7. Monitor your blood pressure. A healthy blood pressure is lower than 120 Systolic and lower than 80 Diastolic or 120/80.
8. If you have high cholesterol, follow your doctor's advice in addition to making healthy food choices and being active. Have your cholesterol checked by your primary care physician every year.
9. Limit the number of sugary drinks you have. High blood sugar encourages the growth of plaque in your arteries and increases your risk for diabetes, heart disease and stroke.
10. Maintain a normal body mass index (BMI) between 18.5 and 25 is optimal for cardiovascular health. Calculate [your BMI here.](#)
11. Switch red meat for fish or a vegetarian main course
12. Limit your alcohol intake to 1 or fewer drinks per day
13. Add more whole grains to your diet
14. Talk to your doctor about taking an omega-3 fatty acid supplement
15. Keep your waist circumference under 40 inches if you're a man, or 35 inches if you're a woman.
16. Eliminate as many trans fats from your diet as possible
17. If you snore, talk to your physician to ensure it isn't caused by [obstructive sleep apnea.](#)
18. Get 7-8 hours of quality sleep every night.
19. Learn the warning signs of a heart attack. [Click here to learn the symptoms of a heart attack.](#)
20. Know your risk for developing heart disease. Visit a [primary care physician](#) for a blood pressure and weight check as well as a fasting glucose and cholesterol screening to determine your risk of developing heart disease.
21. Make your snacks nutrient-rich with whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits and vegetables.
22. Switch to fat-free and/or low-fat dairy products
23. Don't sit for long periods of time. Take a walking break.
24. Avoid second-hand smoke.
25. Add a variety of colors to your plate. A variety of heart-healthy nutrition keeps you living at your best health potential.
26. Maintain a healthy blood sugar. High blood sugar encourages the growth of plaque in your arteries and increases your risk for diabetes, heart disease and stroke.
27. Learn the warning signs of a stroke. [Click to learn the symptoms of stroke.](#)
28. Ask your physician about an ankle-brachial index test to screen for [peripheral artery disease.](#)

If you're worried about your heart health, schedule an appointment with one of our primary care physicians. UT Health San Antonio has primary care locations across San Antonio and in the Hill Country. [Click here to find a UT Health Primary Care Physician.](#)

MG ER Questionnaire

ER EMS questionnaire for MG patients

1. Have you been in the ER or seen by EMS (Emergency Medical Services) related to a diagnosis of MG? Please note - this can be pre-diagnosis.
2. Was your experience positive? If so, what happened to make it positive?
3. Was your experience negative? If so, what happened to make it negative?
4. What information would you like ER or EMS personnel to have?
5. What information would you like patients with MG to have?

For instance - do you call your MG doctor on the way to the ER? Do you have a med alert bracelet? Are you able to communicate your needs in an ER? Do you have someone with MG knowledge accompany you?

SEND RESPONSES TO: Suzanne Ruff at myasthenia.patient.experience@gmail.com
OR MAIL TO: **Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America**
355 Lexington Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017-6603

Here is a bit of information that may be of interest to you.

The **Neurology Now** magazine has a name change and is now called **Brain&Life**. It has the same type of information as before but maybe more than before. The June/July issue that I have just read is full of very interesting articles. One such article is: **"20 Questions to Ask Before Surgery"** - attachment. The other attachment is a form that can be completed to receive the magazine. It is FREE!.

Support Groups in Texas ----- LET'S GO TEXAS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Central Texas MG Support Group meets every 2nd Wed. Spicewood Springs Library 8637 Spicewood Springs Rd Austin 78759

Linda Ann & Larry Joslin, Facilitators Started in February 2007 www.mg-centraltexas.org

Alamo MG Support Group meets in San Antonio on the 2nd Health Link Fitness Center, 288 W. Bitters Rd San Antonio 78216

Elroy and Gail Tschirhart, Facilitators Started in February 2007 www.mgsouthtexas.org

Houston MG Support meets in Houston every 2nd Saturday. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Houston 77055

Meena Outlaw or Sarah Ricks, Facilitators Started January 2017 <https://mghoustontx.org/>

Northwest TX/DFW Support meets in Dallas Every 2nd Sat contact Facilitator to confirm location

Karon & Jerry Faught, Facilitator [Facebook: DFW Myasthenia Gravis Support Group](#)

Southeast Texas MG Support (also servicing Southwest Louisiana) 2nd Thurs in Beaumont - Howell's Furniture Community Rm

Tracey Young, Facilitator Started November [Facebook Page](#)

Corpus Christi Texas MG Support Meets 3rd Saturday confirm location Robert Harvey, Facilitator Started January 2017

https://www.facebook.com/Myasthenia-Gravis-Support-Group-of-Corpus-Christi-Texas-630868910390981/?ref=page_internal&qsefr=1

Deep South Texas MG Support Harlingen Karen Mau Planning

Linda Ann Joslin, Facilitator, MG Support Central Texas www.mg-centraltexas.org