

# FND 101:

## WHAT IT IS, HOW TO IDENTIFY IT AND STEPS FOR TREATMENT

### INTRODUCTION

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) is a serious but often misunderstood condition. This report aims to shed light on what FND is, how to identify the symptoms, and what steps patients and medical professionals can take to manage and treat it.

### WHAT IS FND?

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) affects the nervous system and how the brain sends and receives signals to the body. Unlike other neurological conditions, FND doesn't have a clear structural problem in the brain that can be pinpointed through imaging or other tests.

### COMMON SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

FND can manifest in various ways, making it difficult to diagnose. Some common symptoms include:

- Unexplained weakness or paralysis
- Abnormal gait
- Tremors or tics
- Non-epileptic seizures
- Chronic fatigue
- Pain



## THREE COMMON MYTHS ABOUT FND.

### MYTH #01

**FND is all in your head.**

**\*\*Fact:\*\*** While FND involves neurological processes, it is not "all in your head" in the sense of being purely psychological or imagined. FND is a legitimate medical condition that affects how the brain functions. The brain misinterprets signals, leading to real, physical symptoms that are not consciously produced. This misconception often leads to patients feeling dismissed, when in fact they require proper medical attention and support.

### MYTH #02

**You can't get better if you have FND.**

**\*\*Fact:\*\*** Many patients with FND can experience significant improvements and even complete recovery with the right treatment. Approaches such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), physiotherapy, and education about the condition can greatly reduce symptoms. However, early diagnosis and comprehensive care plans tailored to the individual's needs are crucial for improving outcomes.

### MYTH #03

**FND is exclusively a psychological problem.**

**\*\*Fact:\*\*** FND sits at the intersection of neurology and psychiatry, meaning it involves both psychological and physiological elements. While stress and trauma can exacerbate symptoms, FND is fundamentally about how the brain and nervous system interact. Effective treatment usually combines neurology, psychiatry, physiotherapy, and other healthcare practices to address both the mental and physical aspects of the disorder.

## HOW AND WHERE TO GET MEDICAL SUPPORT.

Finding the right medical support is crucial for diagnosing and treating FND. Here are some steps to take:

- - Consult a Specialist: Neurologists and other specialists can provide a comprehensive evaluation.
- - Seek a Multidisciplinary Approach: Involving physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and other healthcare professionals can be beneficial.
- - Utilise Online Resources: Websites and online support groups can offer additional information and support.

## STEPS TO MANAGE FND WHILE AWAITING TREATMENT.

- **Educate Yourself:** Understanding FND can empower you to take control of your condition.
- **Practice Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** Methods such as meditation and deep breathing can help manage stress and symptoms.
- **Stay Active:** Gentle exercise can improve overall well-being and physical function.
- **Seek Support:** Connecting with others who have FND can provide emotional support and practical advice.



## WHAT TO SAY TO YOUR DOCTOR

Navigating the healthcare system can be challenging, especially with a complex condition like FND. Here's how you can advocate for yourself effectively:

### Prepare Your Symptoms

- - Clearly outline your symptoms, their frequency, and how they impact your daily life.
- - Keep a symptom diary if possible to provide detailed information.

### Use Clear and Specific Language

- - Describe physical symptoms without minimizing them. For example, "I experience sudden weakness in my legs that makes it difficult to walk."
- - Mention if symptoms worsen with stress or fatigue, but emphasize that they are persistent even outside of stressful situations.

### Request Specific Tests or Referrals

- - Ask for a referral to a neurologist or a specialist in functional disorders.
- - If previous tests (like MRIs or blood work) have come back normal, mention this as it can be indicative of FND.

### Express Your Need for Understanding

- - "I have researched my symptoms and believe they align with Functional Neurological Disorder. Can we explore this possibility?"
- - "I need a multidisciplinary approach to manage these symptoms, including access to neurology and psychological support."

## TAKE THE NEXT STEP TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING FND

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. Now that you have a better understanding of FND, it's important to take action:

### For Potential Patients:

- - Join A Support Community: Connect with others who understand what you're going through. Search FND Support Group to join an online community in your country.
- - Schedule an Appointment with a Specialist: Make an appointment with a neurologist or a specialist in functional disorders. Early diagnosis can make a significant difference.
- - Download A Symptom Tracking App: Keep a detailed record of your symptoms to share with your healthcare provider. Example: [formulation.neurosymptoms.org](http://formulation.neurosymptoms.org)



### For Healthcare Providers:

- - Access Additional Resources: Enhance your understanding of FND by contacting us and requesting our curated resource guide at [darreninform.com](http://darreninform.com)
- - Join A Professional Network: Connect with other healthcare professionals dedicated to improving FND diagnosis and treatment.
- - Refer Your Patients: Use a patient referral guide to ensure they receive comprehensive care. Your local practice should have access to one.

By taking these steps, you are not only helping yourself or your patients but also contributing to greater awareness and understanding of Functional Neurological Disorder.

## CONCLUSION

FND is a complex but manageable condition. By debunking myths, recognizing symptoms, and seeking proper medical support, both patients and healthcare providers can work towards better understanding and treating this disorder. Early intervention and comprehensive care strategies are key to improving quality of life and outcomes for those affected by FND.

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