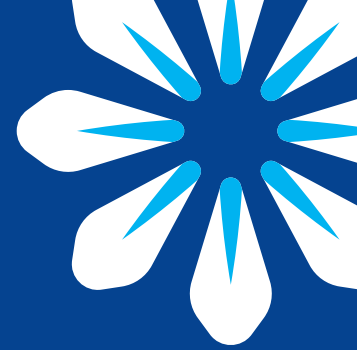


About Motor Neurone Disease



What is MND?

MND stands for motor neurone disease. Motor neurons are the nerves that control our body movement. With MND, something goes wrong with the motor neurons, and the messages from the brain can't get through.

This means the muscles that help us to move, speak, breathe and swallow stop working normally. It also causes muscle cramps, muscle twitches (fasciculations) and for some people it can affect their behaviour. Vision, hearing and sense of touch are retained.

MND is a progressive and life-limiting condition, meaning it will get worse over time. There are different types of MND and disease progression varies, so each person will experience their own speed and pattern of muscle weakness. The average life expectancy from diagnosis is 2-3 years.

Who gets MND?

MND affects people from every country and ethnicity in the world. Two people are diagnosed every week in New Zealand.

There are over 400 people living with MND in New Zealand at any one time. The number of cases of MND diagnosed each year is similar to several other neurological conditions, but the number living with MND is lower because of the relatively short life expectancy.

Signs and symptoms

Early signs of physical problems or other symptoms of MND can be mild. Symptoms also vary from person to person. Where the weakness in the body starts depends on which motor neurons are affected first.

Some of the signs are:

- stumbling due to weakness of the leg or foot muscles
- trouble holding objects due to weakness in the shoulder or the hand muscles
- slurring of speech or swallowing problems due to weakness of tongue or throat muscles.

The signs and symptoms will worsen over time.

How is MND diagnosed?

There is no single test for MND, meaning a diagnosis can be a lengthy process. Your GP will refer you to a neurologist if there are concerns, who may carry out an EMG (electromyography) to measure electrical activity in your muscles, or nerve conduction studies to measure the speed and strength of nerve signals.

What causes MND?

Most cases of MND occur sporadically. In about 10% of cases, there is a known family link and there are inherited gene mutations.



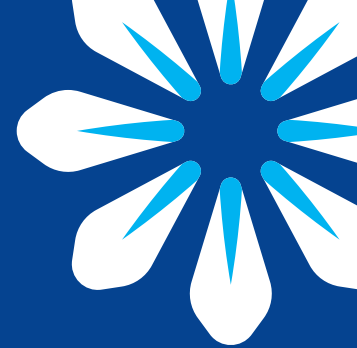
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mnd.org.nz

Motor Neurone Disease NZ is a charity built on the ethos of helping people affected by MND - it's the cornerstone of all that we do. If you or a loved one has MND, we're here for you.



Here for you and your loved ones

While there is no cure for MND yet, there are treatments and supports that improve quality of life and may help people to live longer.

For example:

- treatments to manage symptoms
- equipment and technology can help with practical and communication difficulties
- therapists can offer strategies to help function and ability

A diagnosis of MND can feel overwhelming, and everyone will need time to adjust. Living with MND is extremely challenging.

But with strong community and specialist support, many people maintain some independence for a significant part of the condition's course, and experience a quality of life they may not have imagined possible at the time of diagnosis.

We are here for you and your loved ones as you travel this path.

Why we're here

Motor Neurone Disease NZ is the only charity in New Zealand dedicated to making time count for people with MND today, and supporting research for a future without MND.

Since being established in 1985 by a group of volunteers with their own personal experience of the disease, the organisation has grown into the vibrant and passionate community we know today.



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Every day, we work to make a difference through:

- **Support** – to make life easier for people living with MND and their loved ones.
- **Advocacy** – to drive change and timely access to health and disability services.
- **Education** – to increase knowledge, recognition, and understanding of MND.
- **Campaigning** – to raise awareness and build trust and support for our cause.
- **Fundraising** – to support people impacted by MND now and provide hope for the future.
- **Investing in research** – to improve quality of life, aid advocacy, and support research in New Zealand.

We employ support advisors to provide a free, specialised support and advisory service across New Zealand. We work alongside your healthcare team to improve outcomes and help you remain independent for as long as possible.

For information and support

- Web.** mnd.org.nz
- Email.** support@mnd.org.nz
- Freephone.** 0800 444474
- Post.** PO Box 24036, Auckland, 1345

Get involved

Take part in the annual **Walk to Defeat MND**, take on the **ice bucket challenge**, or **host a Cuppa Tea for MND**.

Follow us on Facebook ([/mndanz](https://www.facebook.com/mndanz)) and Instagram ([@mnd_nz](https://www.instagram.com/mnd_nz))

Sign up to receive updates by emailing admin@mnd.org.nz

Make a donation at
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