The exact cause of CIDP is unknown but there are strong indications that CIDP is an autoimmune disorder. Autoimmune disorders occur when the body's natural defenses (antibodies and lymphocytes) against invading organisms suddenly begin to attack perfectly healthy tissue. The cause of autoimmune disorders is unknown. CIDP is a rare disorder that can affect any age group and the onset of the disorder may begin during any decade of life. CIDP affects males twice as often as females (M2:F1) and the average age of onset is 50. The prevalence of CIDP is estimated to be around 5-7 cases per 100,000 individuals. CIDP can be difficult to diagnose. The symptoms must be present for at least two months and symmetric proximal and distal weakness with reduced or absent tendon reflexes are highly suggestive of CIDP. Tests that can be of diagnostic help include nerve conduction testing and electromyography looking for very slow nerve conduction velocities, lumbar puncture looking for elevated spinal fluid protein without many inflammatory cells and MRI imaging of the nerve roots looking for enlargement and signs of inflammation.