

# Functional Neurological Disorder



## General Information

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) is a medical problem with how the nervous system works. This can happen without disease or injury. It is a problem in how the brain and body send and receive signals (talk to each other). The cause of FND is not known. This condition has many symptoms that are different for every person. CHLA uses a team approach to treat FND.

## Presentation

A person with FND may have:

- Paralysis (not able to move certain body parts)
- Weakness (decreased strength)
- Seizure-like activity (movements without control)
- Changes in walking and/or movement
- Trouble with balance and/or coordination
- Tremors (shaking)
- Pain
- Changes in sensation (feeling)
- Changes in bowel/bladder function
- Changes in speech
- Changes in thinking and/or understanding
- A hard time with swallowing
- A hard time with hearing
- Changes in mood and/or behavior

These symptoms can affect a person's independence, engagement, and sleep routine. It can also cause problems with activities of daily living (dressing, bathing, toileting).

## Treatment

We use a team approach. The team includes occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and psychology.

## Therapy

- Physical therapy and occupational therapy can help with daily activities. They can also improve independence with mobility (ability to move around).
- Speech therapy may help improve communication, thinking, and swallowing.
- Psychotherapy may help a person understand and change how they see their self, the world, and the future. It may help with learning new, healthy ways of thinking and behaving. It can also help a person learn how to deal with changes in mood, stress, and anxiety (worry).
- Family therapy works with all members of the family. It can help the family make healthy changes together.

## Rehab Services

## Medicine

There are no medicines that treat FND. But there are medicines that help symptoms such as pain, anxiety, or depressed mood. Your doctor will work with you to see if you need medicine.

## Other Treatments

These treatments can also help with FND symptoms:

- Yoga
- Meditation
- Music therapy
- Art therapy
- Animal-assisted therapy
- Acupuncture

\*Talk to your healthcare team for more information.

## How to Help Someone with FND

- Learn from the treatment team the best ways to support and manage FND symptoms.
- Give support and encourage communication.
- Validate (support) their feelings.
- Talk to teachers, family members, and other caregivers about symptoms and ways to help.
- Create and stick with routines and boundaries.
- Try out different hobbies and activities.
- Encourage good sleep habits.
- Involve family for support.

## Ways to Find Support

- Ask a social worker for help finding resources.
- Talk to your team for tips on how to deal with changes.
- Build a support system through counseling, family, friends, and community groups.
- Continue to work with a mental health provider. Contact your doctor if you need a referral.

## Resources

- FND Hope (FNDHope.org)
- FND Guide (neurosymptoms.org)
- Neurosymptoms FND Guide App

## Rehab Services

4650 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027 | CHLA.org

Approved by PFE 09/05/23