

# Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Fact Sheet



“We are beginning to open the shroud of mystery that has clouded CFS for a long time. We’re beginning to develop clues and hypotheses that we hope lead to better scientific understanding, prevention and treatment for CFS.”

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Director, U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

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**Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS)** is also known as chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome or CFIDS. It is a complex and debilitating illness marked by profound exhaustion, widespread joint and muscle pain, problems with information processing, memory and concentration, and other physical symptoms. There are more than 4,000 medical journal articles about CFS-related abnormalities found throughout the body.

**CFS affects at least one million and as many as four million Americans.**

Because there is no diagnostic test for CFS and health care professionals lack information about it, **more than 80% of those with the disease have not been diagnosed.**

**CFS** can be as disabling as multiple sclerosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and end-stage renal failure. It causes disability from work and/or school in 25% of patients and costs the U.S. economy **\$25 billion per year in lost productivity and health care expenses.**

- **The Department of Health & Human Services** created a CFS Advisory Committee in 2003 to make recommendations on how to best use federal resources to improve diagnosis, treatment and services for those with CFS.
- **The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention** launched the first public awareness campaign for CFS on November 3, 2006 at the National Press Club, generating more than 1,200 media articles about CFS underscoring that CFS is real and has a devastating effect on the individual, our communities and the nation.
- **The National Institutes of Health** currently funds approximately \$5-6 million a year in CFS research. However, there are no centers funded by NIH where CFS patients can participate in research studies and receive care.

## The CFIDS Association of America

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