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Diabetic peripheral neuropathy

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Diabetic neuropathies constitute a diverse group of conditions. The commonest is a diffuse polyneuropathy which damages distal peripheral nerves, affecting chiefly the feet together with the autonomic system. This condition gradually progresses, albeit at very variable rates, as the duration of diabetes lengthens and, often but not always, is associated with other long term diabetic complications. Diffuse neuropathy affects peripheral nerves symmetrically, chiefly those of the feet and legs. It is predominantly sensory, though in advanced cases, weakness and wasting can occur. Small nerve fibre types are often affected first, leading to diminished thermal and pain sensation before other modalities, including light touch and vibration perception, which tend to diminish later. Progression of neuropathy, which is extremely variable, can be reduced by good control of diabetes over many years. Neuropathy is usually symptomless and this is the principle hazard to the unwary patient. In more advanced neuropathies, the patient is aware of sensory loss: numbness and in some cases, a sensation of coldness, may get progressively worse until there is almost complete anesthesia below the knee though this is not common. Parasthesiae are quite commonly described by patients, while severe pain is relatively rare.

Biography

Ilias Migdalis is Director in the 2nd Medical Department and the Diabetes Centre at the NIMTS Hospital in Athens, Greece. He worked as Clinical Research Fellow in the Diabetic Dept of King's College Hospital, London UK. He has published more than 60 papers in reputed journals and serving as an editorial board member of repute. He has contribution in the position statement of the ADA and EASD and the position statement of the Hellenic Diabetes Association for the management of diabetes in Greece (editorial board). Dr Migdalis is active in several national and international committees in the field of diabetes. He is core member in the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) in the field of Diabetes/Endocrinology of the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

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