

# WHAT IS AUTONOMIC DYSFUNCTION?

Autonomic dysfunction, also known as autonomic neuropathy or dysautonomia, is a group of symptoms that develop as a result of damage to the nerves of the autonomic nervous system (ANS). The ANS controls our involuntary bodily functions that we do not consciously think about, such as blood pressure, heart rate, breathing, digestion, and more.

## HOW IS AUTONOMIC DYSFUNCTION DIAGNOSED?

Dr. Yoo will use a combination of a physical exam, medical history, and testing to uncover the cause of your symptoms. The tests will depend on your symptoms and risk factors; they may include:

- breathing tests
- tilt table test
- genetic tests
- blood tests
- ultrasound



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## AUTONOMIC DYSFUNCTION

Informational  
Pamphlet

## CAUSES OF AUTONOMIC

### DYSFUNCTION:

Autonomic dysfunction can be the result of many conditions, as well as a side effect of certain medications.

Possible causes include:

- familial dysautonomia
- idiopathic orthostatic hypotension
- Shy-Drager syndrome
- Parkinson's disease
- spinal cord injury

## SYMPTOMS OF AUTONOMIC

### DYSFUNCTION:

Symptoms may include:

- orthostatic hypotension (dizziness, fainting, dimness of vision, or weakness upon standing up)
- exercise intolerance
- urinary dysfunction
- sweating abnormalities
- gastrointestinal dysfunction (loss of appetite, diarrhea, constipation, vomiting, or difficulty swallowing)
- sexual dysfunction
- vision problems
- numbness or tingling in extremities or other body parts
- weight loss

## TREATMENTS FOR AUTONOMIC DYSFUNCTION:

Treatment of autonomic dysfunction involves first treating the underlying condition and managing specific symptoms. This may include:

- increasing fiber, salt, and fluid intake
- various medication(s)
- eating small, frequent meals
- stress-relieving activities
- avoiding alcohol, smoking, and excessive caffeine intake
- exercise regularly
- maintain a healthy weight

## RISK FACTORS:

Risk factors include:

- autoimmune neuropathies and other autoimmune disorders
- amyloidosis (abnormal protein build-up)
- pre-diabetes and diabetes
- infectious diseases such as HIV and Lyme disease
- nutritional deficiencies
- certain medications

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For more information, please refer to these websites:

[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)



[www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org)

