

## MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS (ME)

ALSO KNOWN AS CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME (CFS)

ME/CFS is a devastating multi-system disease that causes energy depletion on a cellular level and severe physical limitations.

The hallmark symptom is post-exertional malaise, accompanied by cognitive dysfunction, unrestorative sleep, difficulty maintaining upright posture, profound chronic fatigue or widespread chronic pain all made worse by exertion of any sort.

1-2.5 Million in the US

Significantly more prevalent than multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy combined.



All of us

ME/CFS affects children and adults of all races, income levels, and geographic areas.



25% bed-bound

75% of patients are unable to work.

\$36-51 Billion Loss

The US economic burden is \$36-51 billion per year in medical expenses and lost productivity.



Recovery is rare

Recovery is estimated at just 5%, leaving patients sick for years, even decades.



Low Quality of Life

For moderate to severe patients, it is like living with late-stage cancer, advanced stage AIDS, or congestive heart failure for decades.

*ME/CFS can turn a life of productive activity into one of dependency and desolation.*



### A STANFORD STUDENT

Tom was a healthy 19 year-old maintaining a 4.0 GPA at Stanford University when, during his sophomore year, he came down with a series of viral infections. Within eighteen months, Tom was unable to get out of bed. Now, Tom cannot tolerate any light or sound. His eyes and ears are covered 24/7. He can no longer move his body except for two fingers. He cannot speak or eat and is fed through a tube in his belly.

## COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) can trigger ME/CFS

**“ OVER THE COURSE OF ONE YEAR, [COVID-19 TRIGGERED ME/CFS] WOULD AT LEAST DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS SUFFERING FROM ME/CFS ... A REMARKABLE EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF A CHRONIC ILLNESS.**

– DR. ANTHONY KOMAROFF, HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL