

# Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

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**In news-** A woman from Bengaluru has filed a petition in the Delhi High Court to stop her Noida-based friend, who has been suffering from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome from travelling to Europe to undergo a physician-assisted euthanasia.

## What is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome?

- Also known as **myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome**, is a serious and debilitating disease that **affects the nervous system**, the **immune system** and the body's production of energy.
- Experts have suggested that the **term can trivialize the severity of the illness**. In a 2015 report, the US Institute of Medicine proposed the term **systemic exertion intolerance disease (SEID)**.
- Its **causes are still unknown**. However, the potential **triggers would include viral or bacterial infection, hormonal imbalances** and genetic predispositions.
- **There is no specific test for the disease**, and doctors have to rely on medical examinations, blood and urine tests.
- ME/CFS **can affect anyone, from children to adults of all ages**.
- It's more common in women and people between 40 and 60 years old.
- The biggest telltale **symptom is a significantly lowered ability to do activities that were performed before the illness**. This is accompanied by at least **6 months (or longer) of debilitating fatigue** that is more severe than everyday feelings of tiredness.
- This fatigue is not relieved by sleep or rest and exercising usually makes the symptoms worse.
- **Other symptoms include trouble sleeping, difficulty in thinking, memory retention and concentration,**

dizziness/lightheadedness, headaches, muscle pain, joint ache, flu-like symptoms, tender lymph nodes and digestive issues.

- The most recognizable symptom is **post-exertional malaise (PEM)**. Patients often describe it as a “crash” in physical/mental energy following even minor activities like grocery shopping or brushing teeth.
- As of now, **there is no specific cure or approved treatment for the disease.**
- To manage PEM, patients are recommended ‘pacing,’ in which patients learn to balance rest and activity to prevent crashes caused by exertion.