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facts about physiotherapy and FND



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FND is diagnosed with positive clinical signs



Functional neurological disorder (FND) is characterised by involuntary movements and other symptoms due to a disruption to how the brain processes information. Positive clinical signs include:

- Hoover's sign, used to detect functional leg weakness
- tremor entrainment test.

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FND recovery requires coordinated, multidisciplinary care



FND is a multifaceted condition requiring both physical and psychological therapies due to symptoms such as:

- fatigue and chronic pain
- seizures
- vision changes
- urinary or bowel disturbances.

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Physiotherapists can advocate for patients with FND



Timely and accurate diagnosis of FND is essential to avoid poor outcomes. Physiotherapists can play an important role in this because:

- FND is poorly understood by both the general public and healthcare professionals
- there are high levels of stigma associated with the disease
- access to neurologists is limited in Australia, particularly in rural and regional areas.

2

FND is common, disabling and costly

FND affects four to 12 people per 100,000 annually. FND:

- is the second most common reason for someone to seek a neurology consultation
- can affect quality of life and daily functioning, with symptoms often persisting in the long term
- places a significant financial burden on the Australian healthcare system due to misdiagnosis, recurrent medical consultations and repeated



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Physiotherapists play a key role in the management of FND



Physiotherapists can manage FND through targeted strategies, helping to:

- promote self-management by identifying treatment goals
- set achievable milestones and encourage independence
- employ cognitive and other sensory-level distractions
- improve routines and physical activity with graded non-specific exercise to prevent fatigue and overexertion.

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