ME/CFS Symptoms List

Neurological/Cognitive Symptoms
- Easily confused
- Slow information processing
- Difficulty retrieving words
- Occasional slurred speech
- Occasional dyslexia
- Difficulty with mathematics
- Easily distracted
- Forgetfulness (primarily short-term)
- Attention deficit
- Inability to focus vision and attention
- Inability to cope with fast-paced tasks
- Overall feeling of "spaciness" or "brainfog"

Motor Disturbances:
- Loss of muscular coordination
- Muscle weakness
- Muscle twitching
- Loss of balance and clumsiness

Overload phenomena:
- Hypersensitivities to light, sound motion, odors
- Inability to block out background noise and focus on conversation
- Informational overload with inability to multi-task
- Motor overload, with staggering and weakness
- Dizziness
- Numbness
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Nausea
- Shooting pain
- Overload may cause temporary immobilization

Immune Dysfunction
- A general ill or flu-like feeling, more frequent in the acute onset stage of the illness, less frequent in the chronic stages, most notably post-exertionally
- Tender lymph nodes
- Recurrent sore throat
- New food sensitivities
- New chemical sensitivities
- Hyper-sensitivity to medications and their side-effects
- Allergies

Sleep Dysfunction
- Frequent awakenings
- Nightmares or agitated dreams
- Non-restorative sleep
- Variations in sleepiness and energy throughout the day
- Hypersomnia (excessive sleeping)
- Restless legs syndrome
- Periodic limb movement disorder (jerking or twitching during sleep)

Pain
- Generalized muscle pain
- New onset headaches
- Aching, burning shooting pains anywhere in the body
- Fibromyalgia is a common concurrent syndrome with ME/CFS
- Arthragia without joint swelling
- Veteran M.E. practitioners sometimes noted that pain is most frequent in the upper spine and neck area
- Abdominal pain

Post-Exertional Malaise and Fatigue
- Flu-like or hangover feeling following minimal physical or mental exertion, sometimes immediate, sometimes delayed several hours or a day or more and associated with immune activation, with sore throat, tender lymph glands, general malaise, increased pain and cognitive symptoms
- Feeling worse after exercise, rather than better
- Taking a prolonged time to return to pre-exertional function level
- Lack of endurance

Autonomic Manifestations
Orthostatic Intolerance:
- Neuromediated hypotension (NMH) i.e. problems with regulation of blood pressure and pulse, especially when standing still; with symptoms of dizziness, lightheadedness, slow response to verbal stimuli; an urgency to lie down
- Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) i.e. Excessive heart rate during 10 minutes of standing still; blood pressure drop upon standing; lightheadedness, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, irregular breathing, visual changes sweating, headaches.
- Delayed postural hypotension i.e. blood pressure drop after many minutes of standing, rather than upon standing
- Tilt table test abnormalities

Other autonomic manifestations:
- Palpitations with or without cardiac arrhythmias
- 24-hour Holter monitor results with oscillating T-wave inversions and/or flat T-wave
- Breathing dysregulation
- Shortness of breath
- Intestinal irregularities
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Alternating diarrhea and constipation
- Abdominal cramps
- Bloating
- Nausea
- Anorexia
- Urinary frequency
- Painful urination at night
- Pain in lower abdomen

Neuroendocrine Manifestations
- Loss of thermostatic stability (fluctuations in body temperature; fluctuations of cold and hot in different parts of the body; intolerance to extremes in air temperature; low body temperature)
- Night sweats or other sweating episodes
- Weight change, with loss of appetite in some patients or abnormal weight gain in others
- Worsening of symptoms under increased stress (physical or emotional)
- Loss of adaptation to situations of overload
- Anxiety