



When FND Symptoms Increase

A Short Guide for Patients and Caregivers

Symptoms of Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) can sometimes increase or change unexpectedly. This can feel frightening or overwhelming. FND symptoms are real and involuntary, and their intensity and duration can vary from person to person.

When familiar FND symptoms increase, some people find it helpful to use strategies that support comfort, safety, and coping while symptoms are present. What helps can differ from person to person.

Gentle First Steps

For familiar FND symptoms, some people may find the following strategies helpful:

- Move to a safe position or environment if needed
- Use a familiar breathing or grounding exercise
- Reduce sensory stimulation if it is contributing to discomfort
- Allow time for symptoms to pass or change
- Follow strategies recommended by your healthcare or rehabilitation team

Finding What Helps

Different strategies may be useful for different people. Depending on the person and their symptoms, helpful approaches may include:

- Breathing or grounding exercises

- Listening to calming sounds or music
- Using movement strategies recommended by a healthcare or rehabilitation professional
- Reducing stimulation when sensory input is contributing to discomfort

Not every strategy will be appropriate or helpful for everyone. People with FND may benefit from working with healthcare professionals familiar with the condition to identify strategies suited to their symptoms and needs.

When Additional Support May Help

If symptoms are new, significantly different from a person's usual FND symptoms, severe, persistent, or otherwise concerning, seek appropriate medical care. Having FND does not mean that every new or changing symptom is caused by FND.

Learn More

Healing Horizons for Functional Neurological Disorder provides educational resources and supportive tools for individuals and families affected by FND.

Website: healinghorizonsfnd.ca

Important Note: Healing Horizons for Functional Neurological Disorder provides educational resources and peer-support information. We do not provide medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Individuals should consult their healthcare providers regarding medical care.

References

1. Aybek S, Perez DL. Diagnosis and management of functional neurological disorder. *BMJ*. 2022;376:o64. doi:10.1136/bmj.o64.
2. Lehn A, Petrie D, Palmer D, et al. Managing functional neurological disorder: treatment recommendations for health professionals in Australia. *BMJ Neurology Open*. 2025;7:e000970. doi:10.1136/bmjno-2024-000970.