

6 of the Most Misdiagnosed Health Issues

Few things are more frustrating to patients and doctors than an elusive diagnosis. Patients sometimes undergo batteries of tests, appointment after appointment, failed treatments—and still the suffering continues.

We expect doctors to have answers. But very often they don't.

These six conditions are among the most difficult for doctors to diagnose accurately:

1. Thyroid disorders. Richard Shames, M.D., author of "Thyroid Power," tells *Newsmax Health* that "thyroid imbalance is probably the most misdiagnosed of all conditions and the number of prescriptions for thyroid medication exceeds that for almost any other category of illness."

Thyroid hormone affects every cell of the body, so an imbalance is misdiagnosed for a variety of illnesses. If the thyroid is too high, the symptoms are restlessness, insomnia, rapid pulse, excessive sweating, weight loss, and shakiness, says Dr. Shames.

If it is too low, things are reversed—fatigue, lethargy, and weight gain may result.

If you have any of these symptoms, ask for a full thyroid check including not only the standard T4 and TSH tests, but also a free T3 and TP0 antibody check.

2. Lupus. Steven Victor, M.D., a dermatologist with ReGen Medical in New York, says that lupus is commonly misdiagnosed as seborrheic dermatitis because both conditions cause a similar rash.

A blood test can confirm lupus, which is an autoimmune

disease.

3. Lyme disease. Dr. Victor says that the potentially debilitating disease is so hard to diagnose that it is often called “the great masquerader” in medical literature.

Most think of the classic “bull’s-eye” rash when considering Lyme, but the disease can also present as hives or joint pain.

“It’s important to order a Lyme disease blood test if you think the patient could have been in an area where ticks are present,” Dr. Victor says.

4. Celiac disease. This condition causes an allergic-like reaction to gluten and often has vague and non-specific symptoms that can make it difficult to diagnose, says Shawn Khodadadian, M.D., a gastroenterologist with Manhattan Gastroenterology.

“Not all cases of celiac disease are marked with gastrointestinal symptoms,” he says. “Patients can present with atypical signs such as dental enamel defects, neurological symptoms, increased liver enzymes, and anemia.”

If celiac is suspected, a simple blood test can diagnose it.

5. Fibromyalgia. Fatigue, widespread pain, brain fog, and severe insomnia can signal this often misdiagnosed condition, says Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of “The Fatigue and Fibromyalgia Solution.”

“Physicians are poorly trained to diagnose fibromyalgia even though it affects six million people,” he says. “About 85 percent of cases are misdiagnosed. Doctors will even tell patients they are suffering mental illness.”

There are no lab tests to spot this disease or its cousin, chronic fatigue syndrome. But Dr. Teitelbaum has devised a simple quiz that can help a patient determine if they have fibromyalgia. It’s on his website at .

6. Migraines. Most physicians simply prescribe over-the-counter pain medication for severe migraines and never attempt to find the cause of the condition.

“Over 80 percent of migraines are caused by food allergies,” says Dr. Teitelbaum. “So it’s important to identify the triggers so they can be avoided.”

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