

Understanding FND

A Brain-Network Condition

What is FND?

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) is a real, disabling medical condition caused by a problem with how the brain sends and receives signals.

Think of your brain like a computer:

The Hardware (Brain Structure): In FND, the physical structure of your brain is intact. MRI and CT scans often appear "normal" because there is no damage to the physical tissue.

The Software (Brain Function): FND is a "software" issue. It is a problem with the complex network of signals, communication pathways, and processing that your brain uses to control movement, sensation, and perception.

It is **not** "all in your head" or "psychological." It is a neurobiological condition of the nervous system.

The Science Behind FND

FND is increasingly understood through modern neuroimaging and the "biopsychosocial" model:

Brain Network Connectivity: Research using fMRI shows that people with FND have altered connectivity in brain networks. Systems involved in emotion processing (the limbic system), attention, and motor control do not integrate information as they should.

The "Active Inference" Model: The brain constantly makes predictions about the body. In FND, these predictions (e.g., "my leg cannot move") become weighted too heavily, overriding actual sensory input, leading to symptoms like paralysis or weakness.

Not a Diagnosis of Exclusion: FND is a "positive" diagnosis made by a neurologist based on specific clinical signs (like Hoover's Sign or the Entrainment Test), not just because other tests were "normal."

The Causes

FND is multifactorial — no single factor explains it for everyone:

Biological: Genetic vulnerability or existing neurological conditions (e.g., migraine, epilepsy).

Psychological: Stress, trauma, or anxiety can act as triggers, but are not the sole cause. Many people with FND have no history of psychological trauma.

Social: The way the nervous system reacts to environmental stressors or physical injury.

FND: The Hidden Epidemic

You Are Not Alone

FND: The Most Common Condition You've Never Heard Of.

With around 8,000 to 10,000 new cases identified each year in the UK, Functional Neurological Disorder is far more common than people realize—yet it remains one of the biggest 'blindspots' in modern medicine.

8,000+

new cases every year in the UK alone

Yet most people have never heard of it.

Putting It in Perspective

FND is as common as Multiple Sclerosis or Parkinson's Disease, yet receives a fraction of the funding, research, and public awareness. Thousands of people are living with this condition right now—many without a diagnosis or access to proper treatment.

Key Message

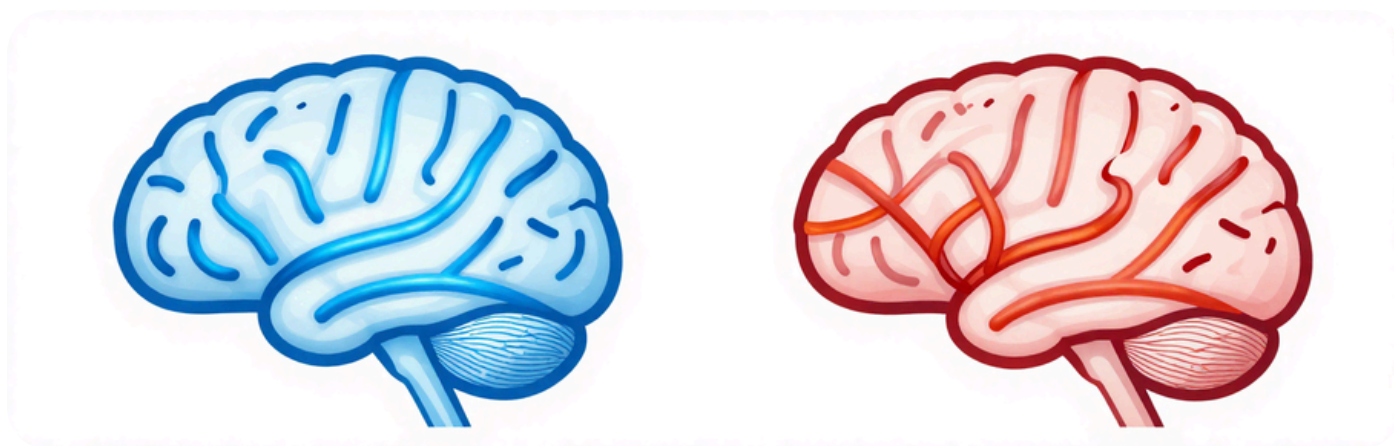
"You are not imagining it. You are not alone. And this condition deserves to be seen."

Understanding FND

How the Brain Signals Go Wrong

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) occurs when there is a problem with the brain's "signaling" pathways, rather than structural damage to the brain itself.

Think of it like a computer system where the hardware is perfectly intact, but the software communication is failing to translate instructions correctly.



The Patient Advocate Perspective

"For a long time, my own symptoms were dismissed as 'just stress' or 'all in my head.' While stress can influence how symptoms feel, FND is a very real, involuntary disorder of the nervous system that deserves proper recognition and care."

Key Message

"FND is not damage to the brain—it's a disruption in how the brain sends signals. The brain is still there, still working. It's the communication that needs repair."



How FND Shows Up

Recognising the diverse symptoms of FND

Because FND affects how the brain sends and receives signals, the symptoms can vary significantly from person to person.

Common symptoms include:

- ✓ Non-epileptic seizures or "blackouts".
- ✓ Movement disorders such as tremors, tics, or walking difficulties.
- ✓ Sensory issues, including numbness, tingling, or changes in vision/hearing.
- ✓ Persistent fatigue or "brain fog" that disrupts daily functioning.

The Patient Advocate Perspective

"My own experience was marked by feeling like I was 'slipping through the net' because of a lack of provider knowledge regarding these diverse symptoms."



Seizures



Movement



Sensory



Fatigue



Fatigue



Fatigue

Key Message

"FND symptoms are real, involuntary, and varied. Understanding the full range of how FND presents is the first step toward faster diagnosis and better care for everyone affected."

Why It Takes So Long to Get Answers

Understanding the diagnostic delay in FND

Many patients experience years of being misdiagnosed or dismissed before receiving an accurate FND diagnosis.

- ✓ Being told that symptoms are "just stress" is a frequent, harmful default response from healthcare providers.
- ✓ The fear of "slipping through the net" due to a lack of provider knowledge is a shared reality for many in our community.
- ✓ The gap between symptom onset and accurate diagnosis can span years of unnecessary suffering.

The Patient Advocate Perspective

"My journey taught me that persistence in pushing back against these dismissals is the true heart of advocacy—we have to pave the way for our own care until the system catches up."



Medical Blindspot



Key Message

"The delay in diagnosis is not a personal failing—it is a systemic issue. By sharing our stories and demanding better from the healthcare system, we can close the gap and ensure no one else has to endure years of uncertainty alone."



You Are Not Alone

Building community and closing the medical blindspot together

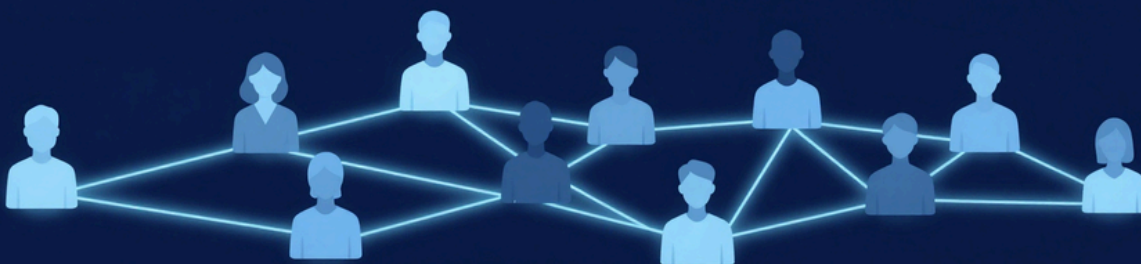
Navigating life with FND is challenging, but you don't have to do it in isolation. Building a community of advocates is the first step toward closing the 'medical blindspot' for good.

The Patient Advocate Call to Action

"I'm sharing my story to help us all advocate for better care. What's the biggest 'blindspot' or frustration you've faced in your own health journey? Let's talk about it in the comments below."

 Save this post for later

 Share with someone who needs to see this



Key Message

"You are not alone in this journey. Together, as a community of advocates, we can demand better recognition, better care, and better outcomes for everyone living with FND. Your voice matters—use it."

The Gap in Care

Where the system fails patients with FND

Your Personal Journey

To effectively raise awareness, you can map your experience to these common clinical pitfalls:

1. The Symptom Phase

Describe the onset of your symptoms. What did you first experience? When did it begin?

2. The Diagnostic Delay

Document the time between onset and accurate diagnosis. How long did it take? What barriers did you face?

3. The Care Gap

Highlight specific failures in the system:

Common Experiences

"I was told my tests were normal, so there was nothing wrong."

"I was referred to mental health services without being told my physical symptoms were part of a neurological condition."

"I was discharged without a treatment plan or path for recovery."

Key Message

"Awareness saves lives and restores function. FND requires a multidisciplinary approach — neurology, physiotherapy, and psychological support — not dismissal or misdiagnosis. If we treat FND with the same urgency as other neurological conditions, we can stop the cycle of delayed care."



FND requires a multidisciplinary approach: neurology, physiotherapy, and psychological support.

lewis@themedicalblindspot.com
<https://themedicalblindspot.com>