

Multiple Sclerosis News Today

MS Burning Feet and Hands Could Be Erythromelalgia

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Erythromelalgia is a rare and painful multiple sclerosis (MS) symptom that I (and others with MS) experience. Almost every night my feet have a tight, swollen feeling accompanied by a terribly hot, burning sensation. It is usually cool to the touch but can feel hot at certain times when a small area of my feet turns bright red.

I have found that elevating my feet and having my husband massage a cooling lotion on them can help alleviate some of the pain. Taking a leg cramp pill that has magnesium or a cannabis edible will help ease the discomfort.

I have always felt my bouts with erythromelalgia have something to do with a vascular problem. I suspected this because when my feet get that tight feeling, I notice there is a raised vein on the top of my foot.

It looks as if my theory was supported in an article titled, “Erythromelalgia as a manifestation of autonomic nervous system involvement in multiple sclerosis,” published in *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders*. The article states, “Erythromelalgia is a rare condition characterized by burning pain, erythema and increased temperature of the hands or the feet.” Although the cause of erythromelalgia is not fully known, it is thought to be a “peripheral vascular dysfunction that leads to simultaneous tissue hypoxia.”

The U.K.’s National Health Services (NHS) also believe that the cause for erythromelalgia is unknown. However, they suggest that it could be genetics, having an

abnormal amount of blood cells, damage to the peripheral nervous system, multiple sclerosis, or an autoimmune disorder. It could also be the result of taking drugs like verapamil or nifedipine.

According to NHS, some of the treatments for erythromelalgia are cooling of the skin, elevating the problem area, and staying in a cool environment. There are certain drugs that can be prescribed as well. Some triggers listed are increased body temperature, exercise, warm socks, gloves or tight shoes, dehydration, drinking alcohol, or eating spicy food.

It is good to know there are different treatment options out there for erythromelalgia. If you are experiencing this problem the best course of action is to be checked out by your doctor and to discuss which treatment option works best for you.