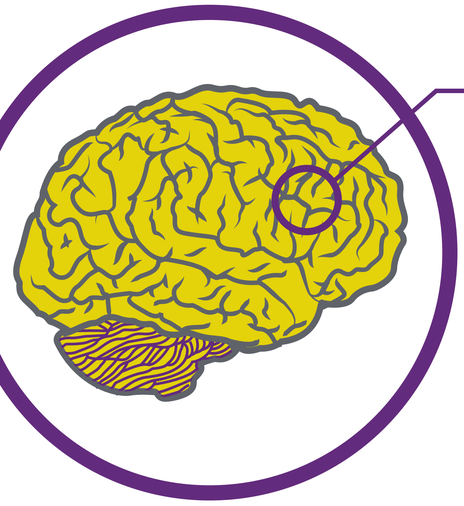
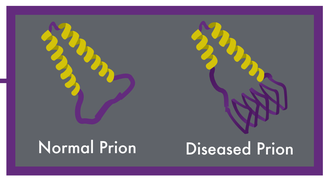
CJD FACT SHEET

How Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Works

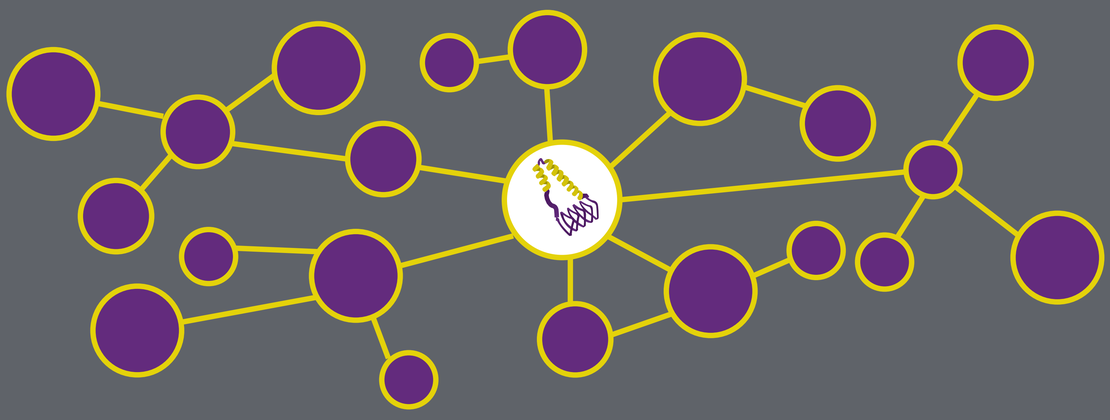




CJD, or Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, is a rare degenerative brain disorder that is typically fatal. It is a prion disease, which is a classification of brain diseases that can occur in both humans and animals. Prions are molecules in the brain that are made up of thousands of smaller chemical units known as amino acids. These thousands of units form into a living cell, taking the shape of a protein that folds into a sheet form. Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease is caused when these prions are folding in an incorrect beta helix. Prions folded in this way are unable to be broken down and used by the body, which causes the incorrect prions to clump together and create a corrosive plaque, which deteriorates the structure of the brain and triggers the onset of dementia-like symptoms and other problems.

How Common is Creutzfeldt-Jakob?

Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease is a rare condition; cases of the disease appear in one in a million people worldwide. There are typically 300 new cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in the United States every year. However, while these numbers may seem small, the people affected by each diagnosis is much larger. Each diagnosis of CJD affects countless family, friends, and loved ones of the patient.



How the Disease Spreads

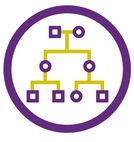
Acquired CJD

>1%

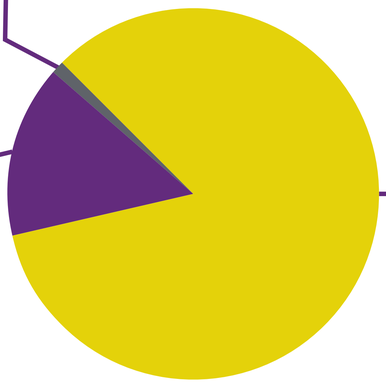
Acquired CJD refers to the form of the disease that is transmitted by exposure to brain or nervous system tissue, normally through certain medical procedures. However, this does NOT mean that the disease is contagious through casual contact, only through direct contact with diseased tissue.

Hereditary CJD

14%



Of the 3 major categories of Creutzfeldt-Jakob, the hereditary variety makes up the smallest percentage. This type of CJD appears in patients who have a family history of brain disease and carry a trait that increase likelihood for prions forming incorrectly.



Sporadic CJD

85%

The most common form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease is sporadic. Ironically, this form of CJD appears in patients who have no evidence of other known risk factors for the disease. Even diagnosis of CJD can be very difficult, and can be a long process of elimination and clinical observation. The only way to get concrete confirmation of CJD is in brain biopsy or autopsy. This is what makes the disease so enigmatic and challenging to find a way to treat or to cure the condition.

How You Can Help

Relatively little is known about Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. The CJD Foundation works with some of the top doctors in the nation and around the world who have become experts on the disease, sharing data and information so that we may one day get to a form of treatment and one day find a cure. Our mission is to provide education and support to families affected by CJD, educate the community about the disease, and advocate for continuing and increasing research funds aimed at CJD. To help out, if you or someone you know is afflicted with CJD, you can contact the Foundation or one of our several alliance organizations and their experts will be able to study the patient and learn as much as they can. Donations are accepted, and advocacy works just as well in creating awareness. Writing a letter to your congressman or other representatives brings more attention to this unfair and mysterious disease and might help bring more government funding to the research effort. With your help, we might conquer this terrible disease.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Foundation, Inc.