



The South African Porphyria Foundation

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Peripheral Neuropathy is when there is damage done to the nerves.

Your peripheral nerves are the nerves that travel to your arms and legs. When the nerves are damaged, they don't function properly. People with peripheral neuropathy have decreased or abnormal sensation in their toes and fingers. Sometimes, they develop problems moving these parts of the body as well.

Porphyria can cause peripheral neuropathy especially when the patient goes through an attack. Patients will often report of feeling / increased unpleasant sensations just before and/after an attack.

Typical Symptoms are:

Unusual sensations in the feet and hands, such as:

- Tingling, (feeling as if ants are all over)
 - Burning,
- Itchy, (often on the top of the feet/hands/forehead are reported frequently)
 - Cold/frozen feeling, • Sharp, sudden pains, or
 - Chronic feeling of bruised feet.

Other symptoms are:

• Muscle stiffness, • Cramping, • Tremors / Seizure activity, and • Difficulty initiating a movement (tends to put stress on a person's muscles). Many porphyria patients might think and seek treatment of arthritis or fibromyalgia or fibromyositis. Peripheral neuropathy can leave the patient anxious, irritable, feeling of can't stand still, but too tired to move, depression can set in when the condition is chronic, as the patient will not be able to function normally due to pain, fatigue, and difficulty using affected extremities. "Lyrica" is often prescribed, but it tends to cause/aggravate depression, and once the chemicals worked out, the symptoms return fast and stronger.

Peripheral neuropathy can be reversed!