

This Year's Donation Project

Supporting Research into the Disease ME/CFS



The fundraising project this year is in support of the research by **Prof. D. med. Carmen Scheibenbogen** and her team at the **Charite in Berlin** into the **disease ME/CFS**.

By supporting the **“ME/CFS Research Foundation”** (<https://mecfs-research.org/en/>), we aim to provide funding for the current ME/CFS medical research conducted by Prof. Scheibenbogen and her team. Thereby promoting recognition by the social welfare authorities of ME/CFS as a disease and protecting those affected from social marginalization.

What is ME/CFS?

ME/CFS stands for **Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome** and is a severe, neuro-immunological disease which very often leads to a high degree of physical disability. Many patients are bedridden or house bound. The disease usually occurs after a viral infection, e.g. influenza, Epstein-Bar virus infection or COVID-19. Women are predominantly affected by this disease.

ME/CFS patients experience a marked worsening of their symptoms after low levels of physical or mental exertion. This includes a variety of symptoms, the most common being: Severe fatigue (pathological exhaustion, especially in the form of post-exertional malaise, i.e. worsening of symptoms after even minor physical, mental or emotional exertion), cognitive disorders, pronounced pain, significant circulatory problems (so-called orthostatic intolerance), hypersensitivity to sensory stimuli and a disorder of the immune system and the autonomic nervous system.

Many doctors are not familiar with this disease, but classify it as a psychosomatic disorder or as symptoms of burn-out syndrome or depression. The patients affected have often been through a long odyssey of doctors and experts and are completely desperate.

In addition, almost 60% of them become incapacitated or even unable to work. Health insurance companies, pension and occupational disability insurances often still do not recognize this clinical picture, so that many patients end up having to live on social welfare.

Before the pandemic, there were estimated 300.000 people affected by the disease in Germany, including 40.000 children. Since “Long Covid” can also lead to ME/CFS in the most severe cases, the number of people with the disease has probably doubled in the last three years; exact figures are not yet available.

So far, there are no specific biomarkers for the diagnosis of this disease and no causal therapies. Although there are some promising approaches to treating this disease, they need to be tested and substantiated by further studies.

The research team led by Prof. Dr. med. Carmen Scheibenbogen has been tackling this task for years.

If you would also like to support our fundraising project this year, please transfer your donation to the following account:

IWC Frankfurt

IBAN: DE 82 5001 0060 0058 9876 06

Verwendungszweck: Spendenmarathon 2023