

can sometimes relieve symptoms and many PCWs claim to have benefited from nutritional therapies. A significant percentage of PWs show marked improvement over time, but many remain ill or cycle through a continuing series of remissions and relapses. The symptoms in severely-affected PWs can be devastating and result in prolonged interruption of work and family life. Some researchers believe that PWs may also be at greater risk of developing other illnesses. However, the extent to which CFIDS may be progressive or degenerative is not yet known. For additional information on treatment options and prognosis see The CFIDS Chronicle or call The CFIDS Information Line.

#### • Is CFIDS contagious?

It is likely that the agent(s) that trigger CFIDS are transmissible. CFIDS has been reported in many children and monogamous adults and "clustering" of cases in families, workplaces and communities also seem to occur. Whether a person develops CFIDS is believed to be a function of how his/her system deals with the causative agent(s). However, most people in close contact with CFIDS patients have not developed the illness. Most clinicians and researchers agree that persons with CFIDS should refrain from donating blood or organs until the mode of transmission in CFIDS is better understood. *Rephrase questions*

#### • How does one live with CFIDS?

Persons with CFIDS must identify their limits and learn to operate within them. Symptoms tend to be aggravated by physical or emotional stress and improved by rest. Those who accept the fact that they have a chronic illness and regulate their lives accordingly generally cope better than those who deny the reality of their illness. Many PWs overcome the sense of isolation and helplessness common to the disease by joining support groups and working to help each other. In telephone calls, newsletters, journals and at meetings and conferences they share experiences, exchange information and learn from each other. PWs often find an equilibrium point at which they can function. As in combating any chronic illness, a positive, hopeful attitude is essential.

#### • Which physicians understand CFIDS?

Finding a physician knowledgeable about CFIDS can be difficult. The symptoms are not organ specific and no single medical discipline has embraced the disease. Individuals who have been diagnosed with CFIDS are excellent sources of referrals and a Physicians Honor Roll of CFIDS clinicians (nominated by their patients) is available from The CFIDS Association of America. In addition, a list of physicians

Knowledgeable about CFIDS is maintained by most local support groups. However, if you already have a good relationship with a doctor, you should urge him/her to develop an understanding of this disease—perhaps by sending him or her several issues of The CFIDS Chronicle.

#### • What can be done to help?

The CFIDS movement is driven by PWs seeking to help themselves and others with the disease. Please join us and the many thousands striving to overcome CFIDS. Fight back! Contribute! Volunteer! Attend or establish a local support group. Write to members of Congress or the media. Become a member of The CFIDS Association of America, Inc. Our objectives are to encourage and inform PWs, their physicians, families and friends; to lead efforts to secure a more dedicated response to CFIDS from the federal government; and to fund increased research into the mechanism and treatment of CFIDS. We are a non-profit organization governed by an all volunteer board of directors comprised of PWs and professionals. We publish the largest CFIDS journal in the nation, The CFIDS Chronicle, and directly fund CFIDS research and CFIDS advocacy efforts. All funds contributed to The CFIDS Association of America, Inc. for a specific valid CFIDS purpose are so allocated—100%! *Feedback*

#### Local Support Contact:

Utah CFIDS Association  
P.O. Box 511257  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84151

Hotline  
461-3378

## A Guide To CFIDS

*maybe keep on cover*

# Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome

The CFIDS Association  
of America

PO Box 220398  
Charlotte, NC 28222-0398

National CFIDS Information Lines:

800/44-CFIDS (800/442-3437)

Fax: 704/365-9755

*take  
the  
step  
back*

*put on back*