

care

For an Appointment

Please call the ALS Association Center at (215) 829-3053 to make an appointment. ALS patients are seen on Thursdays. Patients seeking confirmation of an ALS diagnosis or a second opinion are seen on Wednesdays. Staff members are available by phone Monday through Friday for ALS-related matters.

What is ALS?

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), often referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a progressive neuromuscular disorder. It attacks nerve cells and pathways in the brain and spinal cord, including motor neurons — the large nerve cells that reach from the brain to the spinal cord and throughout the body. When the nerve cells die, the brain's ability to start and control muscle movement dies with them. This leads to muscle weakness and progressive impairment of mobility, speech, swallowing and respiration.

ALS strikes both men and women, generally between the ages of 40 and 75. About 15 new cases are diagnosed daily in the U.S. An estimated 30,000 Americans have the disease at any given time.

With recent advances in research and medical care, many ALS patients are living longer, more productive lives. Half of all those affected live at least three years after initial diagnosis; 20 percent survive five years or more. Up to 10 percent live 10 years or more.

Although the cause and cure of ALS are unknown, research is ongoing to find the answers for this disease.

About the Penn Neurological Institute at Pennsylvania Hospital

The Penn Neurological Institute (PNI) provides comprehensive medical and surgical care for people with disorders of the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nervous system.

The expertise of PNI specialists is supported by the most extensive neurodiagnostic and imaging facilities in the region as well as one of the nation's foremost research programs in clinical and basic neuroscience.

The University of Pennsylvania has a history of excellence in the treatment of neurological diseases dating back to the establishment of the Department of Neurology in 1874.

About the ALS Association

Additional services for people with ALS are available through the Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the ALS Association, which serves more than 800 people with ALS and their families. The chapter's mission is to help people live with ALS, to advocate for patients and caregivers, and to support research into the cause, cure and treatment of ALS. Learn more by calling 1-877-GEHRIG-1, or at www.alsphiladelphia.org.



1-800-789-PENN | PENNHEALTH.COM

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Penn Neurological Institute

THE **ALS** ASSOCIATION CENTER

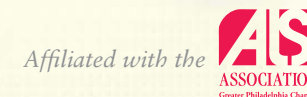


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What is **THE ALS CENTER?**

The ALS Association Center at Penn Neurological Institute at Pennsylvania Hospital offers the region's most comprehensive, up-to-date care for patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and related disorders. Our specialized team provides a multidisciplinary approach — working in collaboration to create a personalized care plan to maximize functioning of every patient. The Center also provides patients and their family members with information about the disease process and the latest in ALS research, including experimental drug trials.

Under the medical direction of Leo McCluskey, MD, the Center is affiliated with the ALS Association, Greater Philadelphia Chapter, and made possible through the generosity of the Philadelphia Phillies.

Patient Referrals

Members of the Penn neuromuscular team at the ALS Association Center see patients with suspected ALS or those who are seeking a second diagnostic opinion. Patients with confirmed ALS may choose to visit the Center for their ongoing treatment. Patients are encouraged to remain under the care of their primary care physicians while utilizing the Center's specialized services. The Center's staff keep referring physicians updated about their patients through a written update from a Center neurologist summarizing the ALS team's recommendations after each clinic visit.

Services Offered

Although there is not yet a cure for ALS, much can be done to help patients live more productive and independent lives. Our ALS Association Center multidisciplinary team develops an ongoing treatment plan for each individual patient to best treat symptoms and maintain quality of life.

The Center meets the rigorous guidelines of certification by the national ALS Association. Our specialists are supported by the most extensive neurodiagnostic facilities in the region as well as one of the nation's foremost research programs in clinical and basic neuroscience.

Initial Evaluation

Our Center neurologists, who are experts in neuromuscular diseases, conduct an initial evaluation. New patients typically have already been evaluated by a neurologist and may have been told they have ALS or another neuromuscular disease. Our goal is to establish the specific diagnosis with as much certainty as possible.

If the diagnosis of ALS is confirmed, patients receive information about the disease and its treatment options. Treatment is aimed at managing symptoms and helping patients maintain independence and quality of life. If appropriate, we will suggest experimental drug trials.

Follow-up Visits

Patients with ALS typically are seen by members of our multidisciplinary team every three months. The nurse coordinator discusses symptoms and current issues in order to determine what specialists patients will see. During the appointments, patients and families remain in an examination room for two to three hours while team members perform specialized evaluations in order to provide the continuum of care so important to patients with ALS.

The ALS Association Center Team

The Center provides the full range of special services essential in treating ALS patients. Our team consists of neurologists, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, mental health nurses, pulmonologists, physiatrists, social workers, speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, dietitians, assistive technology specialists and respiratory therapists.

Commitment to Research

Our patients benefit from the Penn Neurological Institute's strong commitment to clinical and basic science research. The ALS Association Center at the Penn Neurological Institute is actively involved in research projects related to symptom management, therapeutics, imaging and genetics of ALS. The Center offers experimental drug trials to patients as appropriate.

Easy Access

The ALS Association Center staff is available every Thursday at the Penn Neurological Institute at Pennsylvania Hospital, 330 S. Ninth Street, Third Floor, Philadelphia. The facility is wheelchair accessible, and valet parking is conveniently located at the front entrance. The ALS Association, Greater Philadelphia Chapter also offers free transportation for patients within a 60-mile radius. For further information, call (215) 643-5434 or toll free 1-877-GEHRIG-1.

Fees

All patients are accepted, regardless of ability to pay. For those without insurance, affordable arrangements can be arranged with the UPHS billing office. In addition, the ALS Association, Greater Philadelphia Chapter provides a number of free clinic services. However, patients may be asked to use their insurance for other specified clinic services.

THE ALS ASSOCIATION CENTER TEAM

Leo F. McCluskey, MD, MBE
Medical Director, Neurologist

Lauren Elman, MD
Neurologist

Robert Kalb, MD
Neurologist

Susan Gregory, MD
Pulmonologist

Keith Robinson, MD
Physiatrist

Alisa Brownlee, ATP
Assistive technology specialist

Brenda Edelman, LCSW, BCD
Director of patient services

Ame Golaszewski, MS, RD, CNSD, LDN
Clinical dietitian specialist

Gail Houseman, APRN, BC
Regional nurse coordinator

Mary Kelley, MSN, RN, CRNP
ALS clinic coordinator

Jennifer Klapper, APRN, BC
Mental health nurse

Shelly Lewis, MPT
Physical therapist

Melonie Mitchell, RRT
Respiratory therapist

Merisa Palovcak, MS, CFY-SLP
Speech-language pathologist

Scott Rushanan, MS, OTR/L
Occupational therapist

Susan Schwartz, ACSW, LSW
Social worker

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Pennsylvania Hospital
330 S. Ninth Street
Third Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Wheelchair accessible; valet parking available.



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