**Chronic Fatigue Syndrome – All you need to know**

**JOHANNESBURG -** [**Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)**](https://www.healthline.com/health/chronic-fatigue-syndrome?utm_source=ReadNext) **is a serious and often long-lasting illness characterised by severe, persistent fatigue that isn't relieved by rest and worsens with physical or mental exertion.**

CFS is more than just feeling tired. It's a chronic state of fatigue that can last months or even years, significantly impacting daily routines. While the condition is more common in females, particularly those in their 40s and 50s, anyone can potentially develop CFS. It is rare in children, but girls are more likely to be affected when it develops than boys.

For most people, CFS is a lifelong disease, as full recovery is rare and estimated at less than 10%. Yet even with this low recovery rate, a healthy diet, lifestyle changes and effective treatment can improve the condition to a point where patients report a better quality of life. In South Africa, CFS affects approximately 0.5% to 1.5% of the population.

**Don't ignore tell-tale signs.**

CFS symptoms vary from person to person and are based on the severity of the condition. While the most common symptom is fatigue, which is severe enough to interfere with your daily activities, other CFS symptoms include:

* Feeling unrefreshed after a night's sleep
* Impaired memory or concentration
* Sleep problems
* Multi-joint pain without redness or swelling
* Orthostatic intolerance (difficulty standing or dizziness)
* Sensory sensitivities
* Also common are flu-like symptoms, depression, headache, muscle weakness, sensitivity to pain, or sore throat

**How Chronic Fatigue Syndrome is Diagnosed**

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome symptoms are common in many other illnesses and may change or come and go over time, making the condition difficult to diagnose. Doctors use a combination of core symptoms to diagnose the condition. These core symptoms include a reduced ability to perform activities and fatigue, worsening symptoms after activity, sleep disturbances, memory and cognitive problems, and difficulties with balance, among others.

To be diagnosed with CFS, an individual should have persistent or excessive fatigue that interferes with their daily activities. The fatigue must last at least 6 months and be uncurable with bed rest. Doctors may also perform various medical tests to rule out any other health conditions that could be causing fatigue, as most symptoms associated with the condition are the same as those of most viral infections.

If you suspect you have Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, it's recommended to see a doctor, especially if your symptoms persist or recur for six months or longer. A doctor can evaluate your symptoms and determine if CFS is the cause, and if so, create a treatment plan.

**Treatment of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome**

The exact cause of CFS remains unknown, and there is currently no cure or approved treatment. A combination of medications, diet, lifestyle changes, physical and psychological support, may help you manage symptoms.

Your doctor should discuss all of the options with you and explain the benefits and risks of any treatment. They should work with you to develop a treatment plan that suits you and considers your circumstances and preferences.

**Living with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome**

Living with CFS can be difficult as it requires lifestyle adjustments and long-term daily routine changes. Unfortunately, for some people, these changes may lead to emotional challenges such as depression, anxiety or social isolation. In such instances, joining support groups and professional counselling can provide the essential support.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome is a debilitating condition that may require significant lifestyle changes. Medshield supports its members through life's milestones with compassion and genuine care. As your Partner for Life, Medshield offers quality healthcare at affordable prices and a range of plans that suit specific individual needs.

**FIN**

(594 words)

**EDITORS NOTES**

**FURTHER MEDIA INFORMATION AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS**

* Stone issues this release on behalf of the Medshield Medical Scheme.
* For media enquiries or interview requests, please contact Willem Eksteen, CEO of Stone or a media liaison member of the Stone team at media@stone.consulting / 011 447 0168
* Alternatively, contact Lilané Swanepoel at Medshield at 010 597 4982 / lilanes@medshield.co.za

**MORE INFORMATION ON THE 2025 MEDSHIELD BENEFIT OPTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

Benefits and Contribution amendments are subject to CMS approval.

Please refer to the 2025 Product Page on the Medshield website at [https://medshield.co.za](https://medshield.co.za/).

You can review the benefit adjustments, and value adds and download the 2025 benefit guides by visiting <https://medshield.co.za/2025-products/2025-benefit-options/> or by scanning the relevant QR code:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Benefit package and descriptor** | **QR code to view more detail** |
| **PremiumPlus** provides mature families and professionals with unlimited hospital cover in a hospital of their choice, with In-Hospital Medical Practitioner consultations and visits paid at 200% Medshield Private Tariff, and the freedom to manage daily healthcare expenses through a comprehensive Personal Savings Account and extended Above Threshold Cover.  | A qr code with a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediBonus** provides mature families and professionals with unlimited hospital cover in a hospital of their choice, with In-Hospital Medical Practitioner consultations and visits paid at 200% Medshield Private Tariff, and the independence to manage daily healthcare expenses through a substantial Day-to-Day Limit. | A qr code on a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediSaver** is perfect for independent individuals and young professionals thinking about expanding their families. MediSaver offers unlimited hospital cover in the Compact Hospital Network, with the freedom to manage daily healthcare expenses through a generous Personal Savings Account. | A qr code on a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediPlus** provides middle to upper-income families with complete healthcare cover for major medical and daily healthcare needs. Unlimited hospital cover is provided through a choice of two hospital networks, Prime or the value-focused Compact Hospital Network. Daily healthcare expenses are covered through a generous Day-to-Day Limit. Benefits are identical in both categories, Prime and Compact, with care coordination and doctor referral mandated on MediPlus Compact.  | A qr code on a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediCore** is ideal for healthy individuals looking for comprehensive hospital cover, with daily healthcare expenses self-managed. This option offers unlimited hospital cover in the Compact Hospital Network, with In-Hospital Medical Practitioner consultations and visits paid at Medshield Private Tariff 200%. Day-to-day healthcare expenses are self-funded. | A qr code on a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediValue** is the ideal option for growing families. It offers affordable cover for major medical and daily healthcare needs. Unlimited hospital cover is provided through a choice of two hospital networks, Prime or the value-focused Compact Hospital Network. Daily healthcare expenses are covered through a sizeable Day-to-Day Limit. Benefits are identical on both options, MediValue Prime and MediValue Compact, with care coordination and doctor referral mandated on MediValue Compact. | A qr code with a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediPhila** is ideal for families seeking first-time access to affordable private medical cover. As a MediPhila member, you have full cover for Prescribed Minimum Benefit (PMB) treatment plus R1 million per family for non-PMB In-Hospital treatment in the MediPhila Hospital Network. Coupled with this is Day-to-Day cover for your essential daily healthcare needs. | A qr code on a white background  Description automatically generated |
| **MediCurve** If you are tech-savvy, young and healthy, then MediCurve is the ideal first-time option for you! MediCurve provides generous hospital cover in the MediCurve Hospital Network combined with unlimited virtual Family Practitioner consultations and essential optical and dental cover through network providers | A qr code on a white background  Description automatically generated |

**MORE ABOUT MEDSHIELD MEDICAL SCHEME**

* You never know when you or your family member/s may require medical care or treatment, and most importantly, whether you will have funds available to cover the costs. Medshield is a healthcare fund where all members contribute to the fund every month to cater for medical coverage should the need arise. Medshield is a healthcare fund where all members contribute towards the fund monthly to cater for medical cover should the need arise.
* Medshield has been in operation since 1968, making us one of the most experienced, knowledgeable, and reliable medical schemes in South Africa. Our extensive experience in the healthcare sector guides our understanding of our members' needs. Our excellent cover and benefits and the best quality systems and services have resulted in our exceptional size and strength.
* Each of our options offers affordably priced benefits. We continuously review and improve the range of benefits in each option to bring you what you need.
* We partner with our stakeholders to enable access to sustainable and **affordable quality healthcare** through innovative products and benefits.
* Our impeccable reputation of prompt payments to hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and other medical caregivers guarantees approval from service providers when you present your Medshield membership card.
* Our extensive partner networks place us in the perfect position to offer exceptionally competitive rates to our members.
* Medshield is well-represented throughout all nine provinces and provides seamless access to service providers in your area. Our geographical spread provides convenience if it becomes necessary for you to have a personal discussion with one of our experienced consultants. We also have a streamlined online claim submission system and immediate contact centre assistance, making it easier to manage your membership and claims from the convenience of your home or office.
* Another distinguishing factor is our extensive range of additional benefits and services. These benefits and services have been designed to give members additional support when needed, for instance, in an emergency or when suffering from a chronic or life-threatening condition.
* Compared with other medical schemes, our trustworthiness, impeccable history, and exceptional service guarantee that we come out tops!
* As the interface between the Scheme and our members, Medshield staff are the backbone of our customer service delivery. The successful delivery of service depends entirely on the calibre of our people.