



May 13 – 15, 2025
Postillion Convention Center
The Hague, The Netherlands

The MGFA International Conference is curated as a three-day journey to the future of MG. Each day features a renowned plenary keynote speaker and a variety of sessions, talks, panels, roundtable discussions, and interactive debates.

The first day will encompass a nod to the “past,” with a fresh lens on the historical knowledge and progress that has been made in MG treatment and care; an interactive panel with several patients; and a deep dive into special populations within the MG community.

This leads into our second day, an exploration of the current landscape and a direct confrontation of its shortcomings through lively debates, a full session on congenital myasthenic syndromes, and parallel sessions to dive deeply into basic and clinical topics.

The event culminates with a bold invitation to envision and take aim toward a future “World Without MG” through instigative debates, lively discussion, and presentations of the most promising work from the premier thought and change leaders around the globe.

More information about the conference, including registration, is available at myasthenia.org/internationalconference.

CONFERENCE DAY 1
Tuesday, May 13
8:00am - 5:00pm

SESSION 1 (8:00 am - 10:10am)
Overview of Autoimmunity

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Keynote: An overview of autoimmunity

- Sonia Berrih-Aknin, INSERM/Sorbonne University; France

Microbiota and the antibody/microbiota interface

- Delphine Sterlin, Sorbonne University; France

B cells orchestrate tolerance to the neuromyelitis optica autoantigen AQP44

- Thomas Korn, Technical University of Munich School of Medicine and Health, Munich; Germany

Differences in IgG autoantibody Fab glycosylation across autoimmune diseases

- Theo Rispens, Sanquin; The Netherlands

Thymic cell populations in establishment of self-tolerance

- Marte Heimle, Oslo University Hospital; Norway

BREAK (10:10 am-10:45am)
Explore Posters, Exhibit Hall, and Experience Rooms

SESSION 2 (10:45am-12:15pm)
The Social Impact of MG with Guest Patient Panel

The social impacts of MG

- Dong Dong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Centre for Bioethics; Hong Kong

Patient panel

- Facilitated by Dong Dong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Centre for Bioethics; Hong Kong and Carolina Barnett-Tapia, University Health Network - Toronto General Hospital; Canada

ON-SITE LUNCH (12:15pm-1:30pm)

Lunch provided

SESSION 3 (1:30pm-3:00pm)

Etiology of MG

Identification of genetic risk loci and prioritization of genes and pathways for myasthenia gravis: a genome-wide association study

- Bryan Traynor, Department of Neurology, Johns Hopkins University; USA
In honor of the late Dan Drachman, the co-principal investigator on myasthenia gravis work

Myasthenia gravis-specific aberrant neuromuscular gene expression by medullary thymic epithelial cells in thymoma

- Yoshiaki Yasumizu, Yale University School of Medicine; USA

IL17/Th17/thymoma

- Gurher Saruhan-Direskeneli, Istanbul University; Turkey

Subclinical MG in thymomas

- Florit Marcusse, Maastricht University Medical Center (MUMC); The Netherlands

Perturbations in circulatory NK cells suggest their pathogenic activity in AChR-IgG+ MG

- Soumya Yandamuri, Yale University; USA

Perturbations in circulatory NK cells suggest their pathogenic activity in AChR-IgG+ MG

- Paula Terroba-Navajas, UK Hospital Munster, Germany

BREAK (3:00-3:30pm)

Explore Posters, Exhibit Hall, and Experience Rooms

SESSION 4 (3:30-5:00pm)

Special Populations

Ocular MG

- Jeanine Heckmann, University of Cape Town; South Africa

Women and pregnancy-related issues in MG

- Amelia Evoli, The University of Cattolica del Sacro Cuore; Italy

Neonatal and juvenile MG

- Sithara Ramdas, Oxford Children's Hospital; England

General overview of LEMS

- Jan Verschuuren, Leiden University Medical Center; The Netherlands

WELCOME RECEPTION AND POSTER SESSION 1 (5:20-7:00pm)

Hors d'oeuvres and cocktails provided

CONFERENCE DAY 2

Wednesday, May 14 (8:00am- 5:00pm)

WELCOME

MGFA Lifetime Achievement Award (8:00am- 8:15 am)

Recipient Announcement and Talk

The MGFA Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes a distinguished scientist, scholar, or clinician who has made major contributions in the field of myasthenia gravis. Individuals considered for this award will have spent 25+ years of their career dedicated to the area of neurology, immunology, or genetics, leading to impactful advancement.

SESSION 5 (8:15 am-10:20 am)

Controversies in MG

Keynote: Controversies in MG- “Novel Therapeutics vs the Real World

- James F. “Chip” Howard, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; USA

Debate 1:

New targeted therapies if available should be started in all patients at diagnosis

vs

New Targeted therapies should be used after conventional therapies are tried

- Sophie Lehnerer, Charité – University Medicine Berlin; Germany
- Pushpa Narayanaswami - Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; USA

Debate 2:

Thymectomy remains an early treatment option in Achr ab + MG despite the of targeted therapies

vs

Thymectomy should be reserved for patients with thymoma associated MG

- Henry Kaminski – George Washington University; USA
- Gil Wolfe - University at Buffalo Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences ; USA

BREAK (10:15 am-10:45am)

Explore Posters, Exhibit Hall, and Experience Rooms

SESSION 6 (10:45am-12:15pm)

Congenital Myasthenic Syndromes (CMS)

Genetic analysis of CMS

- Kinji Ohno, Nagoya University Graduate School of Medicine; Japan

Postsynaptic/Dok7 CMS

- David Beeson, University of Oxford Nuffield Department of Clinical Neuroscience; United Kingdom

Presynaptic CMS

- Ricardo A. Maselli, University of California Davis; USA

Agrin/LRP4/MuSK CMS

- Stéphanie Bauché, Sorbonne University; France

Targeted therapies of CMS

- Hanns Lochmuller, University of Ottawa; Canada

Moderated Q&A

- Margherita Milone, Mayo Clinic; USA

ON-SITE LUNCH (12:15pm-1:30pm)

Lunch Provided

SESSION 7 (1:30pm- 3:00pm)

Parallel Tracks

SESSION 7a

MG Monitoring & Aes

International Consensus Guidance management update

- Pushpa Narayanaswami, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; USA

Adverse event monitoring and management

- Michael Hehir, The University of Vermont Medical Center; USA

Guidelines for managing steroidal therapy complications

- Charles Kassardjian, University of Toronto; Canada

Managing exacerbations and crisis, and the role of novel treatments

- Heinz Wiendl, University of Freiburg; Germany

Patient preferences and shared decision making

- Carolina Barnett-Tapia, University Health Network; Canada

SESSION 7b

Antibodies (Basic Science Perspective)

Mechanisms underlying MG immunopathology - MuSK RTX

- Miriam Fichtner, Charité Universitätsmedizin; Germany

Mechanisms of AChR autoantibody effector functions

- Kevin O'Connor, Yale University School of Medicine; USA

Novel mechanisms associated with MuSK autoantibody-mediated pathology

- Gianvito Masi, Yale University School of Medicine; USA

Structure function studies of human autoantibodies targeting NMJ receptors

- Colleen Noviello, University of California, San Diego; USA

BREAK (3:00-3:30pm)

Explore Posters, Exhibit Hall, and Experience Rooms

SESSION 8 (3:30pm-5:00pm)

Parallel Tracks

SESSION 8a

Non-Pharmacologic Interventions

Balancing MG with exercise and sleep: DIG-MG trial

- Anna Punga, Uppsala University; Sweden

Mindfulness for MG

- Sui Wong, King's College; United Kingdom

Mental fatigue and associated factors

- Sarah Hoffmann, Charité Universitätsmedizin; Germany

Comprehensive care in MG: Unmasking the Masqueraders

- Miriam Freimer, Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center; USA

SESSION 8b

Models for MG and Translational Research

Thymic epithelial organoids from mice

- Sangho Lim, Hubrecht Institute; The Netherlands

Mechanism of action of the acetylcholine receptor $\alpha 1$ subunit extracellular domain in inducing antigen-specific immune tolerance in the experimental autoimmune myasthenia gravis model

- Konstantinos Lazaridis, Hellenic Pasteur Institute; Greece

Induction of acetylcholine receptor-specific, autoreactive B cells in a passive transfer myasthenia gravis rat model

- Jie Luo, The George Washington University; USA

Skeletal muscle targeted ClC-1 ion channel inhibitor improves skeletal muscle function and respiratory function in a rat model of MuSK-MG

-Marianne Gerberg Skals, NMD Pharma, Denmark

Immunoregulatory effects of neonatal Fc receptor inhibition by efgartigimod in myasthenia gravis: unraveling a new mechanism of action beyond IgG reduction

- Maria Cristina Tarasco, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Neurologico "Carlo Besta"; Italy

POSTER SESSION (5:20pm-6:20pm)

EVENING EVENT

Offsite Dinner (7:00pm-8:30pm)

Dinner Provided

CONFERENCE DAY 3

Thursday, May 15 (8:00am- 5:15pm)

SESSION 9 (8:00am-10:10am)

The Future of MG: Can We Cure MG?

The Need for a Cure in MG

Stephen Reddel, Sydney Neurology; Australia and
Jan Verschuuren, Lieden University Medical Center; The Netherlands

CAR-T CD19 approaches in autoimmunity

- Aiden Haghikia, Medizinische Hochschule Hannover; Germany

CAAR-T anti-AChR

- Aimee Payne, Columbia University Irving Medical Center; USA

MuSK agonist

- Maartje Huijbers, Leiden University Medical Center; The Netherlands

Complement inhibitors in AChR model: What's new?

- Pilar Martinez, Maastricht University; The Netherlands

Efficacy and safety of autologous BCMA-directed mRNA CAR T-cell therapy in generalized myasthenia gravis: Results from a phase 2b randomized placebo-controlled trial

- James F. "Chip" Howard, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; USA

BREAK (10:10am-10:45am)

Explore Posters, Exhibit Hall, and Experience Rooms

SESSION 10 (10:45am-12:15pm)

Platforms

Selective depletion of AChR specific B cells by Chimeric Autoantibody Receptor T cells

- Gregorio Spagni, University of Florence; Italy

Thymectomy in juvenile myasthenia gravis is safe and effective: results of a 15-year follow up study

- Michelangelo Maestri, Neurological Institute, Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Pisana; Italy

Identification of a Novel Metabolically Active B Cell Cluster in Refractory Myasthenia Gravis: Insights into Plasma Cell Precursors and Therapy Resistance Biomarkers

- Jacopo Morroni, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario Agostino Gemelli IRCCS ; Italy

Clinical Outcome of Myasthenic Crisis: A Multicenter Prospective Study

- Xiao Huan, Huashan Hospital, China

Effects of IL-4Ra shRNA Lentiviral Particles Treatment in Experimental Autoimmune MuSK Myasthenia Gravis Model

- Gizem Koral, Istanbul University; Turkey

Risk of Death in Korean Patients with Myasthenia Gravis

- Hye Yoon Chung, Yonsei University College of Medicine; South Korea

Muscle-specific tyrosine kinase IgG2-4 and IgA autoantibodies in Myasthenia Gravis

- Sofia-Natsuko Gkotsamani, Tzartos Neurodiagnostics; Greece

MiRNA-mRNA-lncRNA networks modulating T and B cell proliferation contribute to unresponsiveness to immunosuppressive drugs in myasthenia gravis

- Paola Cavalcante, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Neurologico "Carlo Besta"; Italy

Facilitators and barriers to exercise in autoimmune MG: a cross-sectional consumer survey study

- Simone Birnbaum, Institute of Myology; France

ON-SITE LUNCH (12:15pm-1:30pm)

Lunch Provided

SESSION 11 (1:30pm- 3:00pm)

Personalized Care

Objective biomarkers for MG

- Anna Punga, Uppsala University; Sweden

Digital endpoints and AI application to MG

- Henry Kaminski, George Washington University; USA

Home monitoring and apps

- Sophie Lehnerer, Charité, University Medicine Berlin; Germany

Artificial intelligence: video or photo analysis

- Martijn Tannemaat, Leiden University Medical Center; The Netherlands

BREAK (3:00-3:30pm)

Explore Posters, Exhibit Hall, and Experience Rooms

SESSION 12 (3:30pm-5:00pm)

What I Don't Know About MG Roundtable

After compelling discussions of the future we envision, the conference concludes with a direct confrontation of our collective knowledge gaps.

CLOSING REMARKS (5:00pm- 5:15pm)