

WHAT IS VON WILLEBRAND DISEASE?

3.2 million people in the U.S. have Von Willebrand disease.

Von Willebrand disease is an inherited bleeding disorder that prevents blood from clotting properly. People with this disease either have low levels of Von Willebrand factor (VWF), a protein that helps blood clot, or the protein doesn't perform as it should. Von Willebrand disease is the most common bleeding disorder and affects males and females equally.

01 | Types

There are 3 major types of Von Willebrand disease:

- Type 1 – the most common and mildest form, which affects 60%-80% of patients. Symptoms might be so minor that the person isn't ever diagnosed. Cafe au lait spots (darkened patches of the skin)
- Type 2 – affects 15%-30% of patients. Those with type 2 have normal levels of VWF, but the factor doesn't function as it should.
- Type 3 – affects 5%-10% of patients. Those with type 3 have very low or no VWF in their blood, and symptoms are usually severe

02 | Symptoms

The most common sign of Von Willebrand disease is abnormal bleeding. The amount of bleeding can vary from one person to another, depending on the type and severity of the case. Some other symptoms can include:

- Nosebleeds that last longer than 10 minutes and occur more than 5 times a year
- Bleeding from cuts or injuries that lasts longer than 10 minutes
- Bruising easily
- Long-lasting or heavy bleeding after procedures
- Heavy periods lasting longer than 7 days
- Spontaneous bleeding in severe cases

03 | Treatments

While there is no cure for Von Willebrand disease, treatment can help stop or prevent bleeding episodes. Treatment will depend on the type and severity of the condition and the response to previous therapy. For minor bleeds, treatment might not be necessary at all. The most common treatment includes medications that cause a temporary increase in VWF to help the blood clot.

For more information on Von Willebrand disease and supportive resources, please visit www.hemophilia.org.

Did You Know?

Women are more likely to experience symptoms of Von Willebrand disease.

References

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/von-willebrand-disease/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20354984>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/vwd/data.html>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/17709-von-willebrand-disease>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/vwd.html>