

Supplementary material

Baseline data	Functional limb weakness				Neurological control subjects				Healthy control subjects		
	FU n= 65	NFU n=31	Deceased n=11	Tests	FU n = 23	NFU n=15	Deceased n = 8	Tests	FU n=22	NFU n=15	Tests
Age at symptom onset in years, mean(SD)	38 (10)	35 (11)	48 (15)	p=0.008 ¹	39 (12)	34 (9)	42 (12)	NS	41 (10)	37 (16)	NS
Female (%)	86%	68%	73%	NS	87%	80%	75%	NS	95%	87%	NS
Deprivation category	4 (1)	4 (1)	2 (1)	p<0.001 ⁴	3 (1)	4 (2)	3 (3)	NS	3 (2)	4 (2)	NS
Hysterectomy (%)	22%	35%	0%	NS	4%	7%	13%	NS	4,5%	0%	NS
Benefits (%)	57%	68%	36%	NS	30%	53%	38%	NS	0%	0%	NS
Smoker (%)	25%	48%	45%	p=0.048 ³	39%	40%	63%	NS	13%	23%	NS
Opioid drugs user (%)	35%	29%	22%	NS	4%	13%	13%	NS	0%	0%	NS
Health related quality of life and functioning (SF36)											
General health (% fair/poor)*	39%	61%	78%	p=0.031 ²	14%	69%	25%	p=0.003 ³	10%	0%	NS
Physical functioning *	35 (49)	20 (35)	50 (55)	NS	45 (65)	25 (50)	23 (68)	NS	95 (10)	100 (5)	NS
Pain *	33 (35)	28 (33)	45 (19)	NS	50 (24)	45 (22)	38 (16)	NS	50 (40)	50 (25)	NS
Energy *	25 (40)	25 (20)	40 (45)	NS	33 (36)	45 (33)	35 (32)	NS	50 (25)	66 (40)	NS
Psychiatric co-morbidity											
Depression (HADS)*	8 (9)	7 (11)	11 (9)	NS	6 (8)	6 (8)	6 (11)	NS	4 (7)	4 (4)	NS
Anxiety (HADS)*	7 (9)	7 (10)	6 (7)	NS	4 (6)	4 (5)	8 (8)	NS	1 (4)	1 (2)	NS
Somatisation disorder (SCID) (%)	20%	42%	36%	p=0.024 ³	0%	0%	0%	NA	0%	0%	NA
Total psychiatric diagnoses (SCID)	2 (2)	2 (2)	3 (5)	NS	1 (2)	1 (2)	1 (1)	NS	0 (1)	0 (0)	NS

Illness perception (IPQ)											
‘my illness is a mystery to me’	2 (1)	2 (2)	1 (1)	NS	4 (2)	2 (1)	2 (2)	NS	NA	NA	NA
‘my symptoms are permanent rather than temporary’	3 (2)	3 (1)	3 (2)	NS	4 (2)	4 (1)	4 (2)	NS	NA	NA	NA

Supplementary table 1. Baseline comparison within and between group of participants in follow-up (FU), not in follow-up (NFU) and deceased subjects. Initial comparisons were made using chi square test and t-tests or Kruskal-Wallis test. In the healthy control group, the deceased are not included in the table, as in total only one patient died. * SF36 and HADS data was missing in 6 healthy control subjects, 6 cases and 3 neurological controls. One-by-one comparisons using Mann-Witney U test: ¹Deceased were significantly different from FU and NFU, ²deceased were significantly different from FU, ³FU is significantly different from NFU, ⁴All groups differ from each other. Low deprivation category (range 1-7) corresponds to worse deprivation. SF36 functioning and disability scale (range 0-100): high score means better functioning or less pain). Work and social adjustment scale, (range 0-40): higher score means worse impairment).

	Functional weakness (n in follow-up = 63)		Neurological controls (n in follow-up = 23)	
Weakness severity at follow-up	Spearman's rho	P-value	Spearman's rho	P-value
Measures at follow-up:				
General health (SF36) at FU	0.55	p<0.001	0.41	0.053
Change in general health	-0.24	p=0.058	-0.26	p=0.244
Physical functioning (SF36) at FU	-0.58	p<0.001	-0.83	p<0.001
Change in physical functioning	-0.32	p=0.011	-0.71	p<0.001
Pain (SF36) at FU	-0.57	p<0.001	-0.40	p=0.062
Change in pain	-0.01	p=0.929	-0.61	p=0.003
Energy (SF36) at FU	-0.50	p<0.001	-0.41	p=0.050
Change in energy	-0.36	p=0.004	0.25	p=0.262
Work and social adjustment (WSAS) at FU	-0.47	p<0.001	0.59	p=0.003
Depression (HADS) at FU	0.32	p=0.009	0.36	p=0.096
Change in depression	0.25	p=0.051	-0.09	p=0.683
Anxiety (HADS) at FU	0.12	p=0.352	0.33	p=0.126
Change in anxiety	0.00	p=0.982	0.18	p=0.416
IPQ total symptoms	0.52	p<0.001	0.34	p=0.112
Change in response to 'my weakness is a mystery to me'	0.23	p=0.082	-0.03	p=0.898
Change in response to 'stress or worry caused my symptoms'	-0.13	p=0.304	0.09	p=0.702
Change in response to 'damage to nervous system caused my symptoms'	0.26	p=0.043	-0.02	p=0.944
Change in IPQ total symptoms	0.25	p=0.048	0.25	p=0.262
Any treatment	0.15	p=0.237	0.27	p=0.209

Supplementary table 2. Correlations at follow-up. Correlations between weakness outcome in the functional and neurological group and factors at follow-up (at FU) or differences between baseline and outcome (change).