



INTERNATIONAL AUTOIMMUNE
ENCEPHALITIS SOCIETY

What is Autoimmune Encephalitis (Encephalopathy):

Antibody Mediated Autoimmune Encephalitis (Encephalopathy) is a rare disease that can be progressive or relapse-remitting. It is caused when the immune system makes auto-antibodies that are not supposed to be there. These auto-antibodies (aka antibodies) begin to attack healthy brain cells *wrongly* identifying those healthy brain cells as foreign. An autoimmune response is now occurring as the immune system attacks and destroys the brain's healthy cells. Your own body's immune system is attacking your brain. You are the victim of "Friendly fire".

The antibody attacks by targeting special receptors in the brain that is on the cell surface, or exposed at the synapse of healthy nerve cells in the brain. Sometimes the antibody seeps inside the cell it is attacking. These antibodies bind to the healthy brain cell damaging or destroying them. Severe brain inflammation occurs. The brain now malfunctions. All brain functions can be compromised: emotions, psychosis, memory, cognition, problem solving, speech, movement, seizures, balance, visual processing planning, sensory, hunger, thirst, behavior and personality traits, often followed by suppressed levels of consciousness and coma may occur.

AE is TREATABLE. Recovery is possible but most face years of treatment and rehabilitation. Many are left with various levels of brain injury.

