

Coping with an Invisible Illness: Our Story



An investigation into those with emotional and physical effects on those who suffer from Trigeminal Neuralgia

A day in a life of three individuals who suffer from this condition

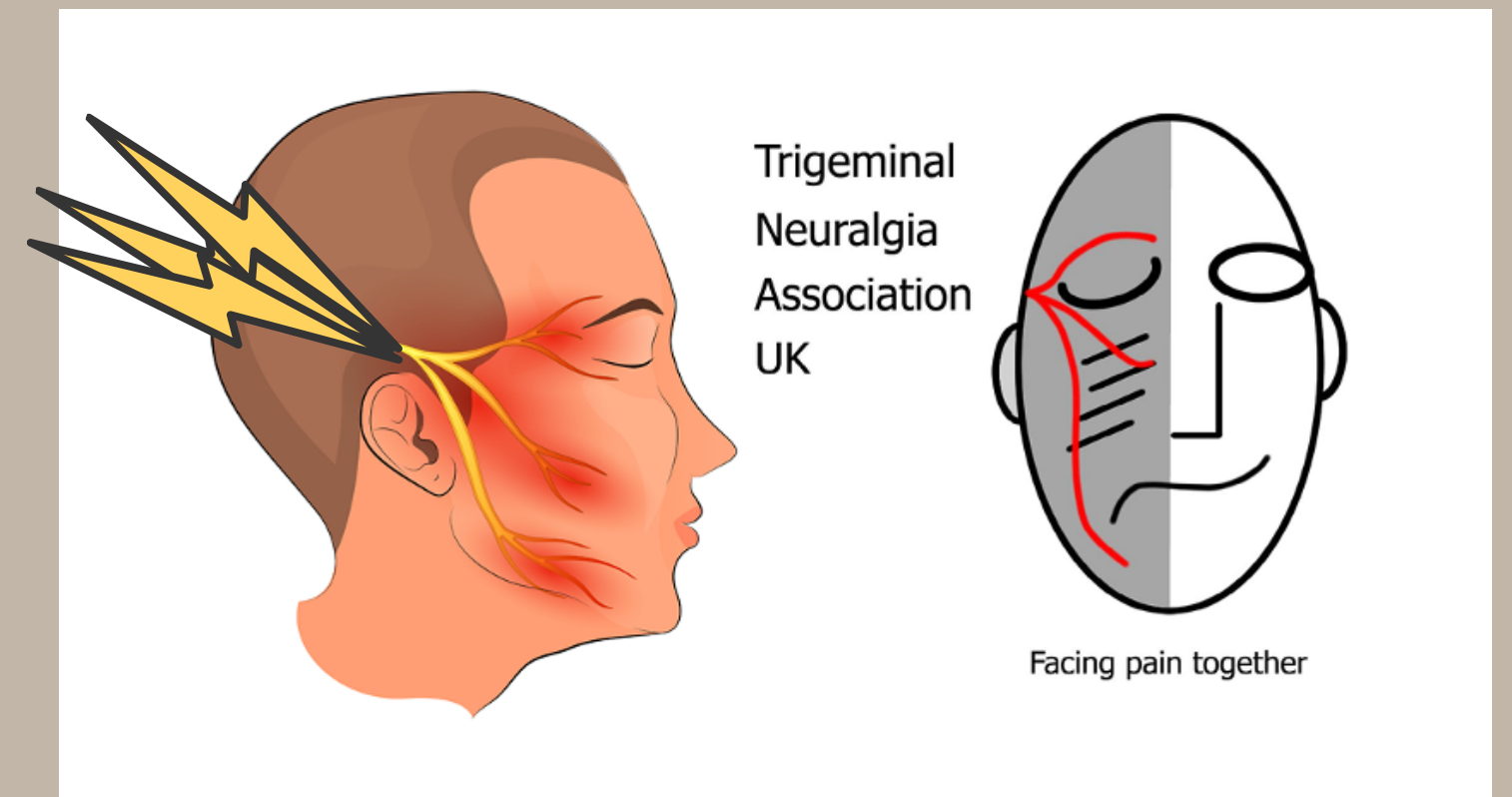
Trigeminal Neuralgia (TN) is known as prosopalgia, tic douloureux, the Suicide Disease or Fothergill's disease.

Trigeminal Neuralgia is a condition and a disorder of the fifth cranial (trigeminal) nerve that causes episodes of intense, stabbing and electric shock-like pain in the areas of the face.

These areas are where the branches of the fifth nerve are distributed - lips, eyes, nose, scalp, forehead, upper jaw and lower jaw.

Trigeminal Neuralgia affects just 10 people in every 100,000.

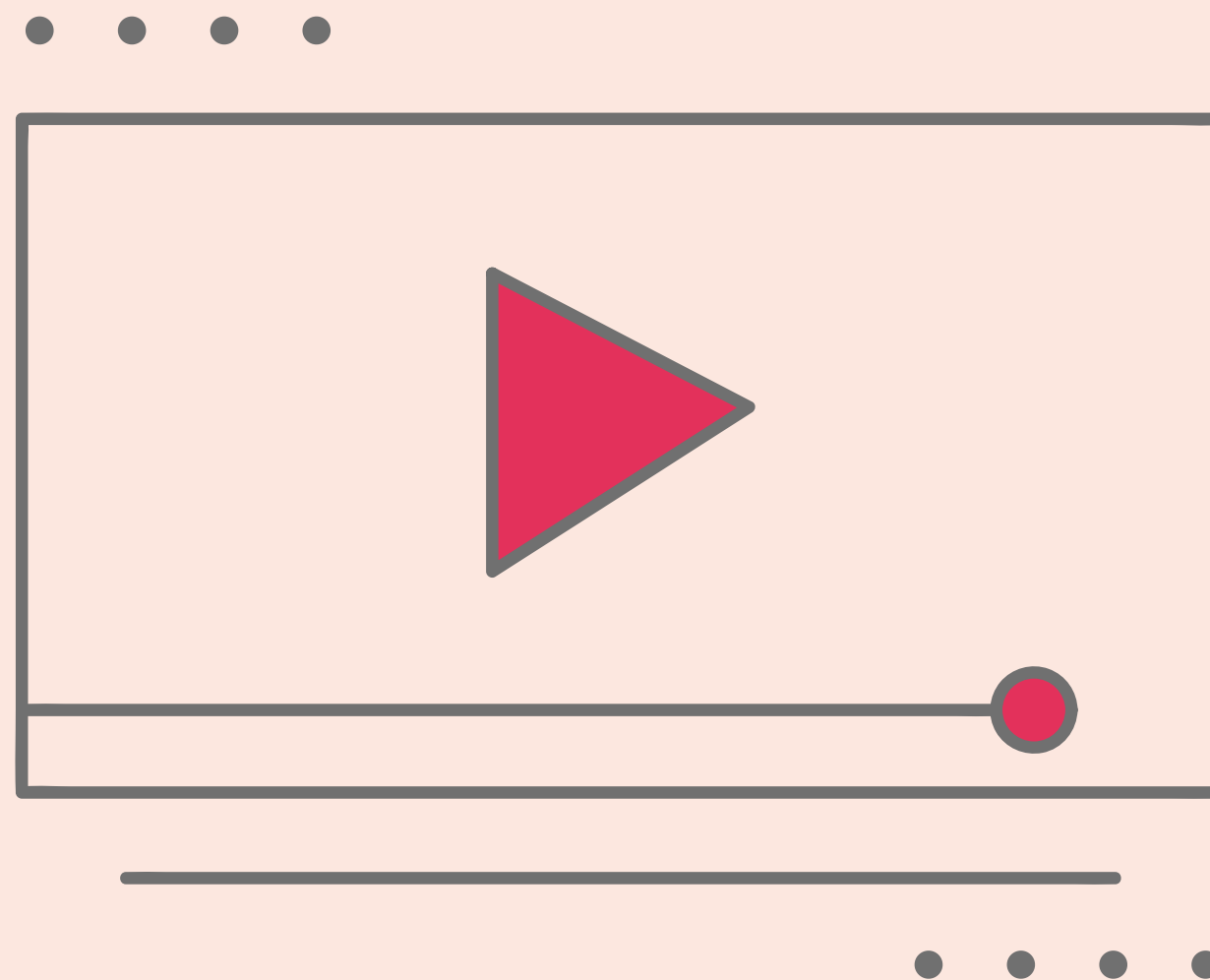
Trigeminal Neuralgia is classed as an "invisible illness" as it does not do not show the signs of the condition externally all the time. However, it may show symptoms such as pain, fatigue, dizziness, weakness, or mental health disorders.



Source from Google Images

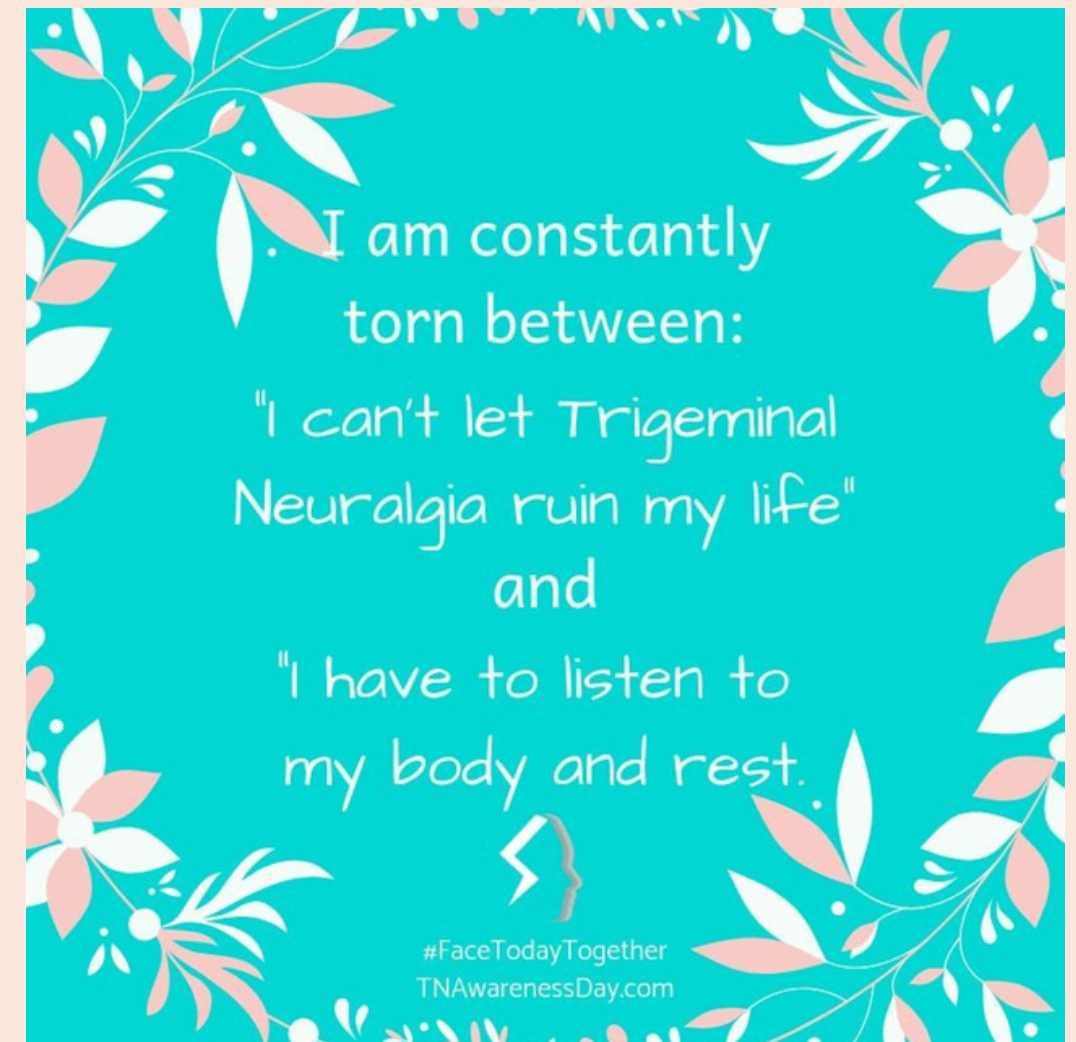


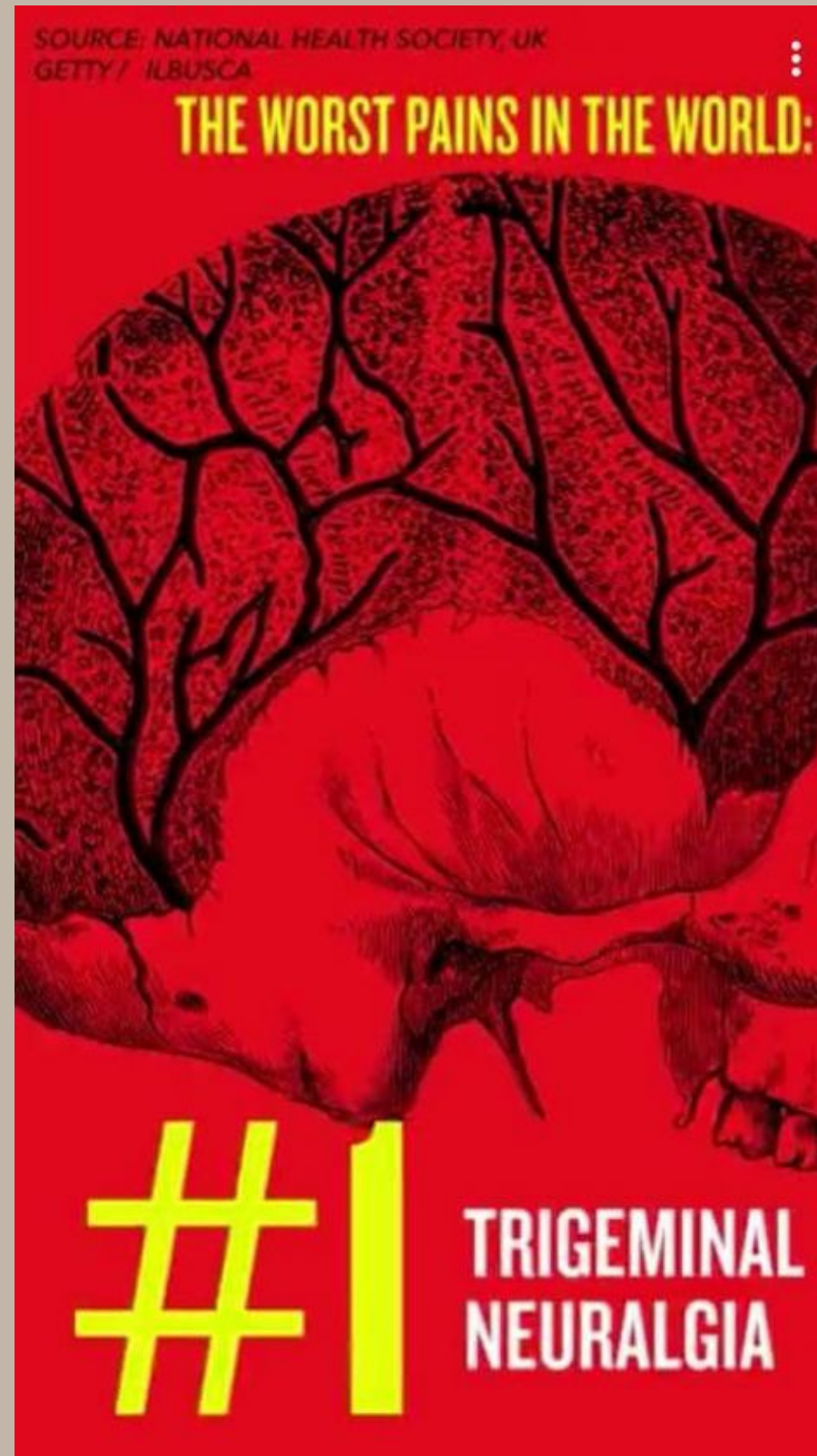
My experience of Trigeminal Neuralgia



Please click the image to see the video

Source from Google Images





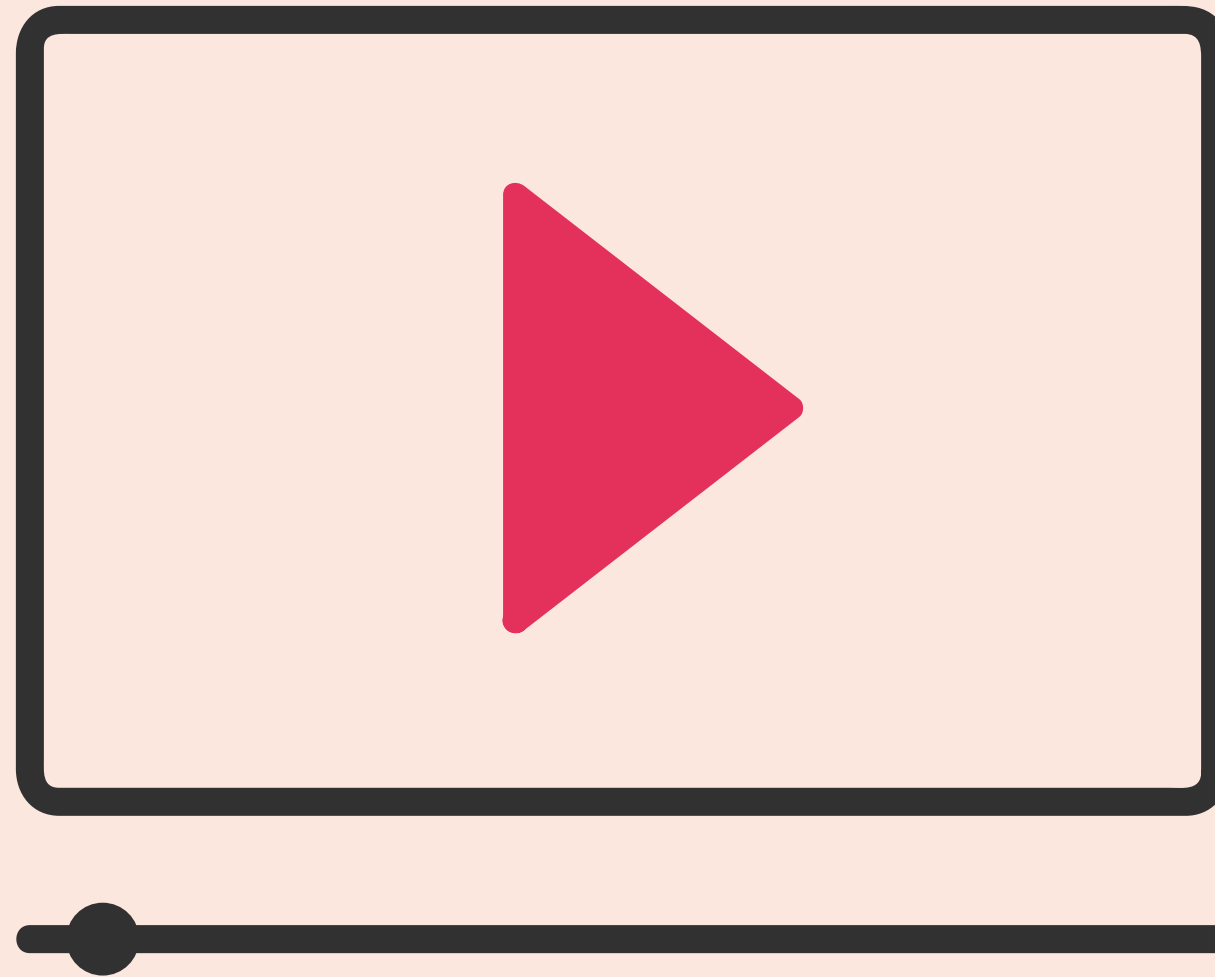
TN is the Suicide Disease

"If this is what I've got to live with for the rest of my life, I don't want this life any more. The pain is so excruciating you just can't cope and want to give up. There is no life and no purpose with excruciating extreme constant pain."

Words from a TN sufferer called Danielle, who was 20-year-old.

TN has been ranked as #1 the worst pains in the world according to the National Health Society UK

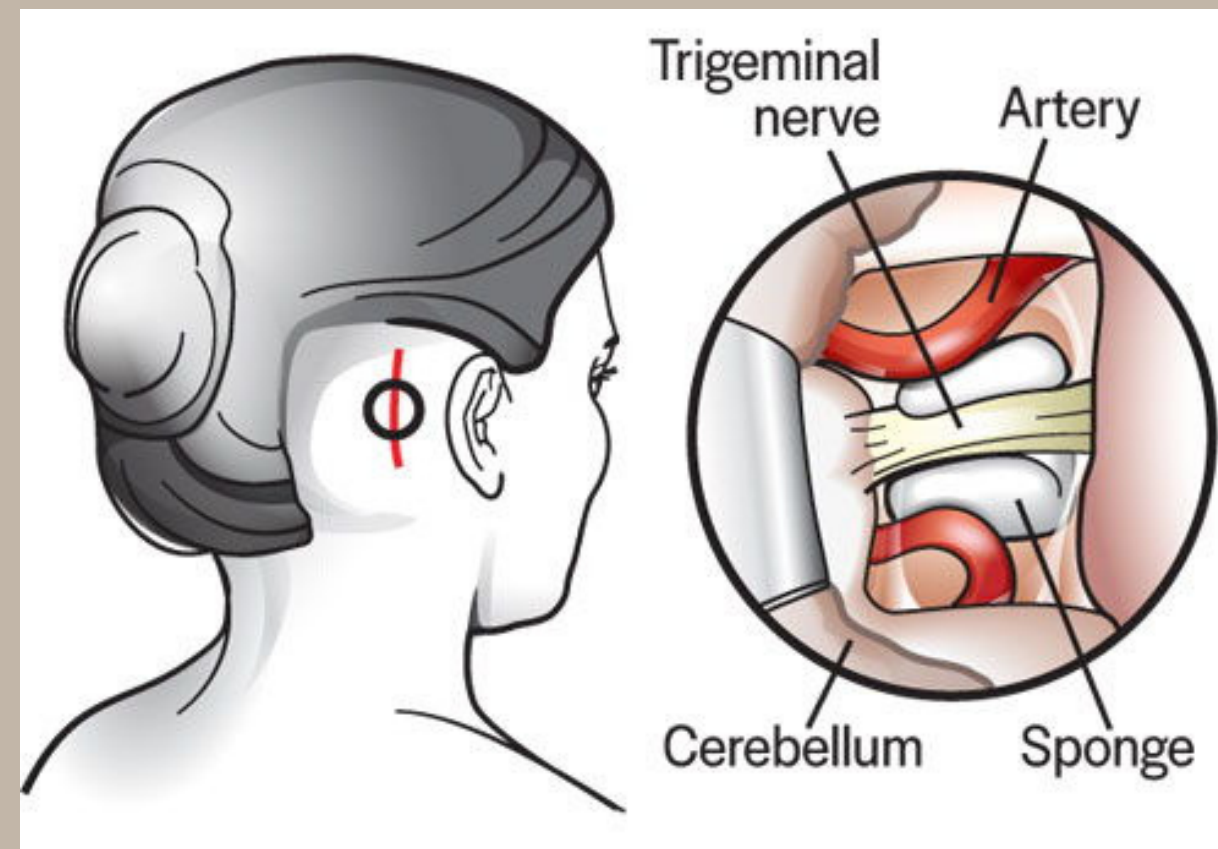
Nick, aged 51
TN sufferer of 2 and 1/2 years



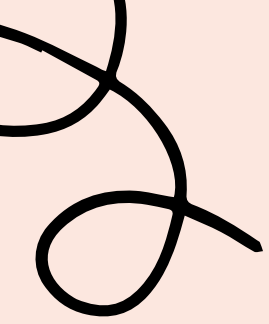
Please click the image to see the video

Treatment: What is MVD?

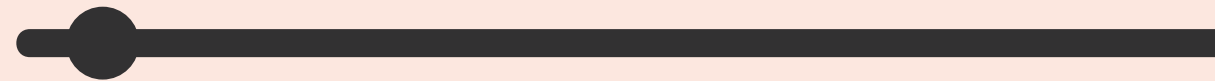
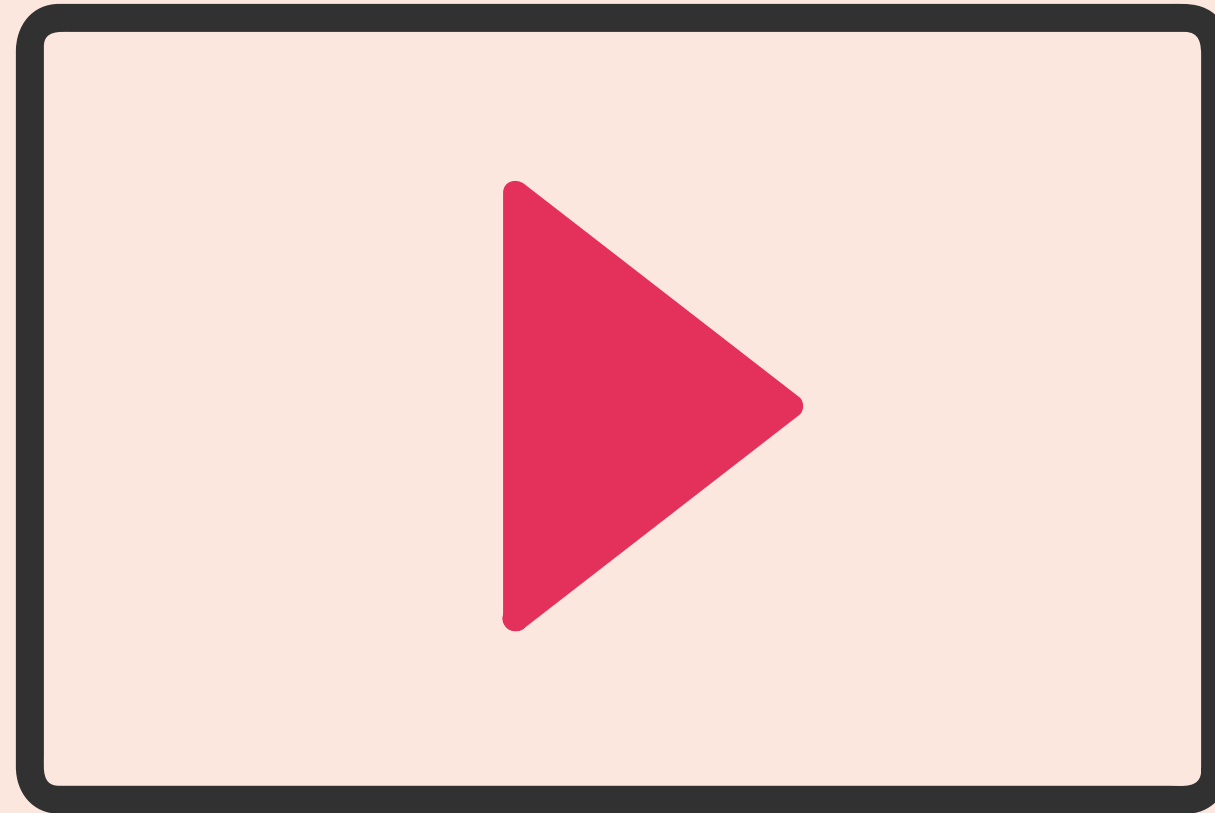
Microvascular decompression (MVD) is a surgery to relieve abnormal compression of a cranial nerve causing trigeminal neuralgia, glossopharyngeal neuralgia, or hemifacial spasm. MVD involves opening the skull (craniotomy) and inserting a sponge between the nerve and offending artery triggering the pain signals.



Source: <https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/proxy/-zJdDHAnwPNjhpNnCIUYIYJg4aGaCGi8RlI3Hs6mGK8-B8HxaPFEuM1A0oKaOosZ8mzkJZAwKfGXGh6N5HRyWP0zpMi9BpBLsblmKErO3rEiBzDKoMCDHfEGlqklSPJ-Q>

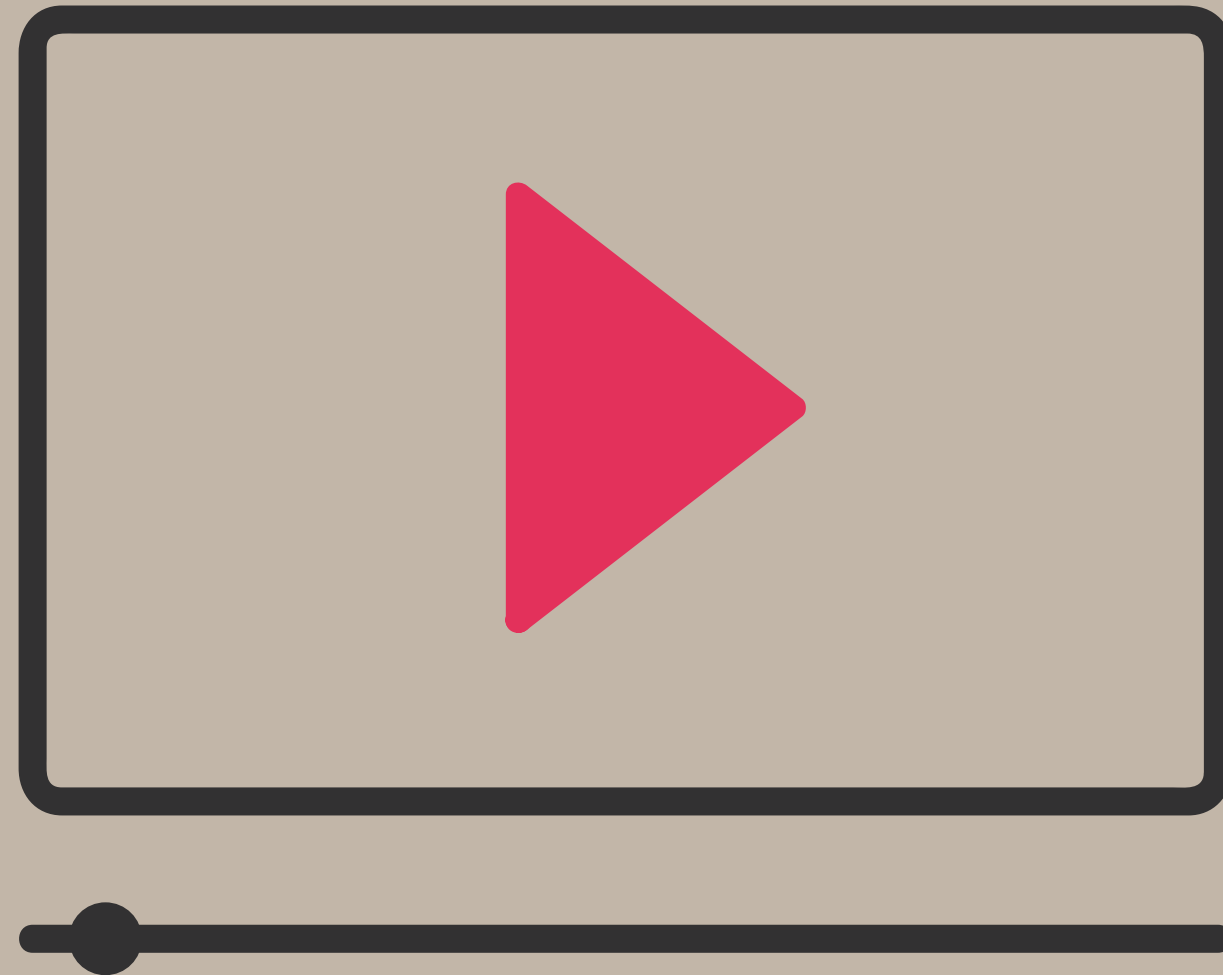


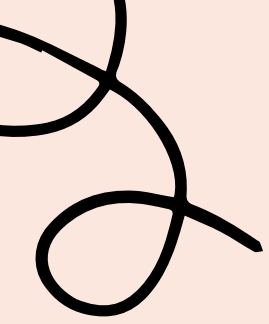
Lesley, aged 63.
TN sufferer of 4 years



Please click the image to see the video

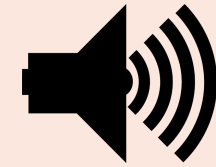
How social media has impacted on those who suffer with with invisible illnesses





Sue, aged 74.
TN sufferer of 11 years

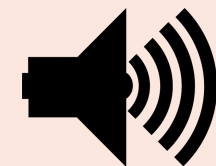
Talks about her experience with Trigeminal Neuralgia



"TN is rare and only happens to people when they are 50 or 60 years old" according to Sue's Neurologist.

Sue states that, in the Facebook group "you see loads of people who have it and is more common than you think"

Her MVD experience with TN



Trigeminal Neuralgia Awareness

Trigeminal Neuralgia Awareness day is 7th October and the colour associated with TN is Teal. On this day TN sufferers wear teal or change their socials to the TN profile picture to express that they have this condition and they want to be heard by everyone. Often people speak of their experiences on this day.

If you have been affected by TN, please go to: <https://www.tna.org.uk>



Source: <https://authorlakishajohnson.com/2016/10/07/october-7-trigeminal-neuralgia-awareness-day-2/>



Source: <https://www.pacificneuroscienceinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/TN-awareness-October-2017.jpg>