

Ask CDC

National ALS Registry

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Welcome to *Ask CDC*, the weekly podcast that answers *your* questions. I'm your host, Susan Laird. This week, a listener wants to know about the National ALS Registry.

ALS stands for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. Many people know ALS as Lou Gehrig's disease, named after the famous baseball player who got the illness and had to retire in 1939 because of it. ALS is a disease that affects the nerve cells which make muscles work. The disease makes the nerve cells stop working and die. The nerves lose the ability to trigger specific muscles, which causes the muscles to become weak and leads to paralysis.

Scientists have been studying many factors that could be linked with ALS, such as heredity and environmental exposures. Other scientists have looked at diet or injury. No cause has been found for most cases of ALS. In the future, scientists may find that many factors together cause ALS.

The National ALS Registry is a program to collect, manage, and analyze data about people with the disease. It includes data from existing national databases and information provided by patients who choose to participate. Researchers can use Registry data to look for disease pattern changes over time and try to identify whether there are common risk factors among ALS patients. Additionally, the Registry provides updated links for patient resources, like ALS clinical trials. For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/als.

Thanks for listening. To submit *your* question to *Ask CDC*, email us at askcdc@cdc.gov.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.