ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord and causes muscle weakness that leads to paralysis across all parts of the body.

1. 100% Fatal
2. Veterans are at a higher risk of developing ALS
3. 2-5 Years: Average life expectancy
4. 5,000+ people diagnosed each year
5. Symptoms: gradual loss of ability to speak, swallow, walk, grasp objects, move, and breathe
6. No known cause or cure for ALS
7. Diagnosis is difficult, made by ruling out other diseases
8. 90% of ALS cases are sporadic – no family history
9. 10% of ALS cases are familial – inherited genetically
10. $250,000 – estimated out-of-pocket cost of care for person with ALS

VA provides a lot of support to manage symptoms and adapt to changes over the course of the disease to help maintain independence and quality of life – VA is a unique leader in this area.

Information obtained from ALSA and NIH (NINDS)