Year 2005 Paper two: Questions supplied by Ilynn

**Question 3**
Which of the following diabetic neurological complications is most likely to improve with time?
A. Diabetic amyotrophy.
B. Orthostatic hypotension.
C. Gustatory sweating.
D. Loss of deep tendon reflexes.
E. Painful peripheral neuropathy

### Classification of Diabetic Neuropathies

#### Symmetric
1. Distal, primarily sensory polyneuropathy
   a. Mainly large fibers affected
   b. Mixed
   c. Mainly small fibers
2. Autonomic neuropathy
3. Chronically evolving proximal motor neuropathy

#### Asymmetric
1. Acute or subacute proximal motor neuropathy
2. Cranial mononeuropathy (Isolated to the 6th or 7th nerve palsies - diplopia)
3. Truncal neuropathy (painful)
4. Entrapment neuropathy in the limb

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**Symmetric polyneuropathy**

- Most common
  - Sx: distal sensory loss, hyperesthesia, paresthesia and dysesthesia
  - Pain typically involves the lower extremities and is usually present at rest and worsens at night
  - Acute (last < 12 mths) and chronic form
  - Pain eventually subsides and disappears

**Diabetic polyradiculopathy**

- Usually self-limited and resolve over 6-12 months
- Severe disabling pain in the distribution of one or more nerve roots
- Accompanied by motor weakness
- Intercostal or truncal radiculopathy causes pain over thorax or abdomen
- Involvement of lumbar plexus or femoral nerve cause pain in thigh or hip (ass with muscle weakness in hip flexors or extensors (diabetic amyotrophy)

**Mononeuropathy**

- Less common than polyneuropathy
- Presents with pain and motor weakness in the distribution of single nerve
- Vascular etiology suggested
- 3rd CN involvement most common – diplopia
- Others: IV, VI or VII (Bell’s palsy)

**Autonomic Neuropathy**

- Involve cholinergic, noradrenergic and peptidergic (peptides such as pancreatic polypeptide, substance P)
- Multi- systems: cardiovascular, GIT, genitourinary, sudomotor and metabolic systems

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1 Harrisons Online: Diabetic Neuropathy
The most likely answers are A and E. The painful peripheral neuropathy is in the acute stage and it will gradually become painless but that would not be considered as “improving”. Therefore the answer is A: diabetic amyotrophy