A 20-year-old man presented with a 3-week history of progressive distal paresthesia in his lower limbs. His gait became clumsy and he became unable to mobilize. The patient was vegetarian and after questioning admitted to regular recreational nitrous oxide use.

Examination revealed a clear dorsal column syndrome with pseudoathetosis of the upper limbs and reduced proprioception of upper and lower limbs with reduced vibration sensation to the xiphisternum. Knee jerk reflexes were brisk bilaterally with absent ankle jerk reflexes and extensor plantars (figure, video 1).

MRI showed high signal in the dorsal column throughout the spinal cord. Vitamin B$_{12}$ levels were low (84 ng/L). This presentation represents subacute combined degeneration of the cord secondary to nitrous oxide abuse by inactivating B$_{12}$ levels. The patient was treated with vitamin B$_{12}$ replacement and intensive neurorehabilitation. Nitrous oxide abuse should always be considered in a young patient with dorsal column syndrome.$^1$

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**Reference**
Teaching Video NeuroImages: A 20-year-old man with distal paresthesia

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