

- COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT) TO HELP WITH ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND FATIGUE
- ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE YOUR MEMORY, CONCENTRATION, THINKING AND MOOD (COGNITIVE REHABILITATION)
- ADVICE, EXERCISES AND MEDICINES TO HELP WITH BOWEL OR BLADDER PROBLEMS  
ADVICE AND TREATMENTS FOR SEXUAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION, VAGINAL DRYNESS, LOW SEX DRIVE (LOSS OF LIBIDO) OR DIFFICULTY REACHING ORGASM

#### CAUSES OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS) HAPPENS WHEN YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM ATTACKS YOUR BRAIN AND NERVES. IT'S NOT CLEAR WHAT CAUSES THIS.

YOU MIGHT BE MORE LIKELY TO GET MS IF:

- YOU'RE AGED 20 TO 50
- YOU'RE A WOMAN – WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO GET MS
- YOU HAVE A BROTHER, SISTER OR PARENT WHO HAS MS
- YOU SMOKE – PEOPLE WHO SMOKE ARE ABOUT TWICE AS LIKELY TO DEVELOP MS

#### USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

NATIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY [WWW.NATIONALMSSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.NATIONALMSSOCIETY.ORG) AN AMERICAN ORGANISATION. BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD FROM THEIR WEBSITE, INCLUDING "PAIN – THE BASIC FACTS".

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY, MS NATIONAL CENTRE, 372 EDGEWARE ROAD, LONDON NW2 6ND

HELPLINE 0808 800 8000 [WWW.MSSOCIETY.ORG.UK](http://WWW.MSSOCIETY.ORG.UK) PROVIDES BOOKLETS: WHAT IS MS? AND PAIN AND MS FACTSHEET.

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**PAIN RELIEF FOUNDATION**

[www.painrelieffoundation.org.uk](http://www.painrelieffoundation.org.uk)

# PAIN IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

PAIN CAN BE A SYMPTOM OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS). IN MS THE NERVES MAY BE TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY AFFECTED BY DAMAGE TO THE LAYER OF INSULATION AROUND THEM (DEMYELINATION). WHEN THIS OCCURS IN PAIN NERVES IT CAN RESULT IN PAIN. THIS PAIN IS OFTEN BURNING OR ACHING IN NATURE AND CAN SOMETIMES BE TREATED WITH DRUGS.

#### WHAT IS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS) IS A CONDITION THAT AFFECTS THE BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD. IT CANNOT CURRENTLY BE CURED, BUT TREATMENT CAN OFTEN HELP MANAGE IT.

#### SYMPTOMS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

THERE ARE LOTS OF POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS). EVERYONE WITH THE CONDITION IS AFFECTED DIFFERENTLY.

#### SOME OF THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- FEELING EXTREMELY TIRED (FATIGUE)
  - PROBLEMS WITH YOUR EYES OR YOUR VISION, SUCH AS BLURRED VISION OR EYE PAIN
  - NUMBNESS OR A TINGLING FEELING IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BODY
  - FEELING OFF BALANCE, DIZZY OR CLUMSY (UNCOORDINATED)
  - MUSCLE CRAMPS, SPASMS AND STIFFNESS
  - NEEDING TO PEE MORE OFTEN OR NOT BEING ABLE TO CONTROL WHEN YOU PEE
  - PROBLEMS WITH MEMORY OR CONCENTRATION
  - SEXUAL PROBLEMS, INCLUDING A DRY VAGINA OR ERECTION PROBLEMS
- SYMPTOMS MAY COME (CALLED "FLARE-UPS" OR "RELAPSES") AND GO (CALLED "REMISSIONS"), AND MAY GET WORSE OVER TIME.**

## TESTS FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

- IF YOUR GP THINKS YOU COULD HAVE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS) THEY'LL REFER YOU TO A BRAIN AND NERVE SPECIALIST (NEUROLOGIST). AT YOUR APPOINTMENT THE NEUROLOGIST WILL ASK ABOUT YOUR SYMPTOMS. THERE IS NO SINGLE TEST TO DIAGNOSE MS.

### TESTS YOU MAY HAVE INCLUDE:

- CHECKS ON YOUR MOVEMENT, COORDINATION, VISION, BALANCE AND REFLEXES
- BLOOD TESTS
- AN MRI SCAN TO SEE IF THERE IS DAMAGE TO THE NERVES IN YOUR BRAIN OR SPINAL CORD
- TAKING A SMALL SAMPLE OF SPINAL FLUID FROM YOUR LOWER BACK USING A NEEDLE (LUMBAR PUNCTURE)
- TESTS THAT USE SMALL SENSORS ATTACHED TO YOUR SKIN TO MEASURE HOW QUICKLY MESSAGES FROM YOUR EYES OR EARS TRAVEL TO YOUR BRAIN

## TYPES OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

THERE ARE 3 MAIN TYPES OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS). THEY AFFECT EVERYONE DIFFERENTLY. YOUR NEUROLOGIST MAY NEED TO MONITOR YOUR SYMPTOMS AND TEST RESULTS FOR SOME TIME TO DIAGNOSE WHICH TYPE YOU HAVE.

### THE 3 MAIN TYPES OF MS

- **RELAPSING REMITTING**-YOU HAVE FLARE-UPS OF SYMPTOMS WHERE THEY GET WORSE (RELAPSE) AND THEN GO AWAY OR GET BETTER (REMISSION). OVER TIME, THIS TYPE OFTEN DEVELOPS INTO SECONDARY PROGRESSIVE MS.
- **SECONDARY PROGRESSIVE**-YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE THERE ALL THE TIME, AND GET SLOWLY WORSE.
- THIS TYPE OF MS CAN COME AFTER RELAPSING REMITTING MS.
- **PRIMARY PROGRESSIVE**-YOUR SYMPTOMS SLOWLY GET WORSE OVER TIME. YOU DO NOT HAVE PERIODS WHEN THEY GO AWAY OR GET BETTER (REMISSION).
- THIS IS LESS COMMON THAN THE OTHER TYPES OF MS.

## TREATMENT FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

- HERE IS CURRENTLY NO CURE FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS). BUT THERE ARE TREATMENTS THAT CAN SLOW THE PROGRESSION OF MS AND HELP EASE SYMPTOMS.
- THE TYPE OF TREATMENT WILL DEPEND ON THE TYPE OF MS YOU HAVE AND YOUR SYMPTOMS. YOU'LL PROBABLY NEED DIFFERENT TREATMENTS OVER TIME.
- YOU'LL BE SUPPORTED BY DIFFERENT HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS. THIS MAY INCLUDE A SPECIALIST MS NURSE, A NEUROLOGIST (BRAIN AND NERVE SPECIALIST), PHYSIOTHERAPIST AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST.

### TREATMENTS YOU MAY HAVE INCLUDE:

- **STEROID MEDICINE** TO REDUCE SWELLING AND HELP NERVES WORK BETTER
- MEDICINES CALLED DISEASE-MODIFYING THERAPIES TO REDUCE HOW MANY RELAPSES YOU HAVE AND HOW SERIOUS THEY ARE
- MUSCLE RELAXANT MEDICINE TO HELP RELIEVE MUSCLE SPASMS, CRAMPS OR STIFFNESS
- MEDICINE TO TREAT PAIN, VISION PROBLEMS AND OTHER SYMPTOMS

### TREATMENT AND SUPPORT FOR SYMPTOMS OF MS

YOU'LL ALSO BE OFFERED TREATMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE SYMPTOMS OF MS. EVERY PERSON'S NEEDS WILL BE DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON THEIR SYMPTOMS.

### SUPPORT YOU MIGHT NEED MAY INCLUDE:

- ADVICE ABOUT HOW TO MANAGE TIREDNESS (FATIGUE)
- PHYSIOTHERAPY AND EXERCISES TO HELP WITH MOVEMENT PROBLEMS AND MUSCLE PAIN
- MOBILITY EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING WALKING STICKS, FRAMES AND WHEELCHAIRS) AND HOME ADAPTATIONS (SUCH AS STAIR LIFTS OR RAILINGS) TO HELP YOU WITH DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES