

# Multiple Sclerosis

Educational Information

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## What is Multiple Sclerosis?

Multiple Sclerosis is a progressive disease that causes damage to the myelin sheath, a protective covering of the nerves.

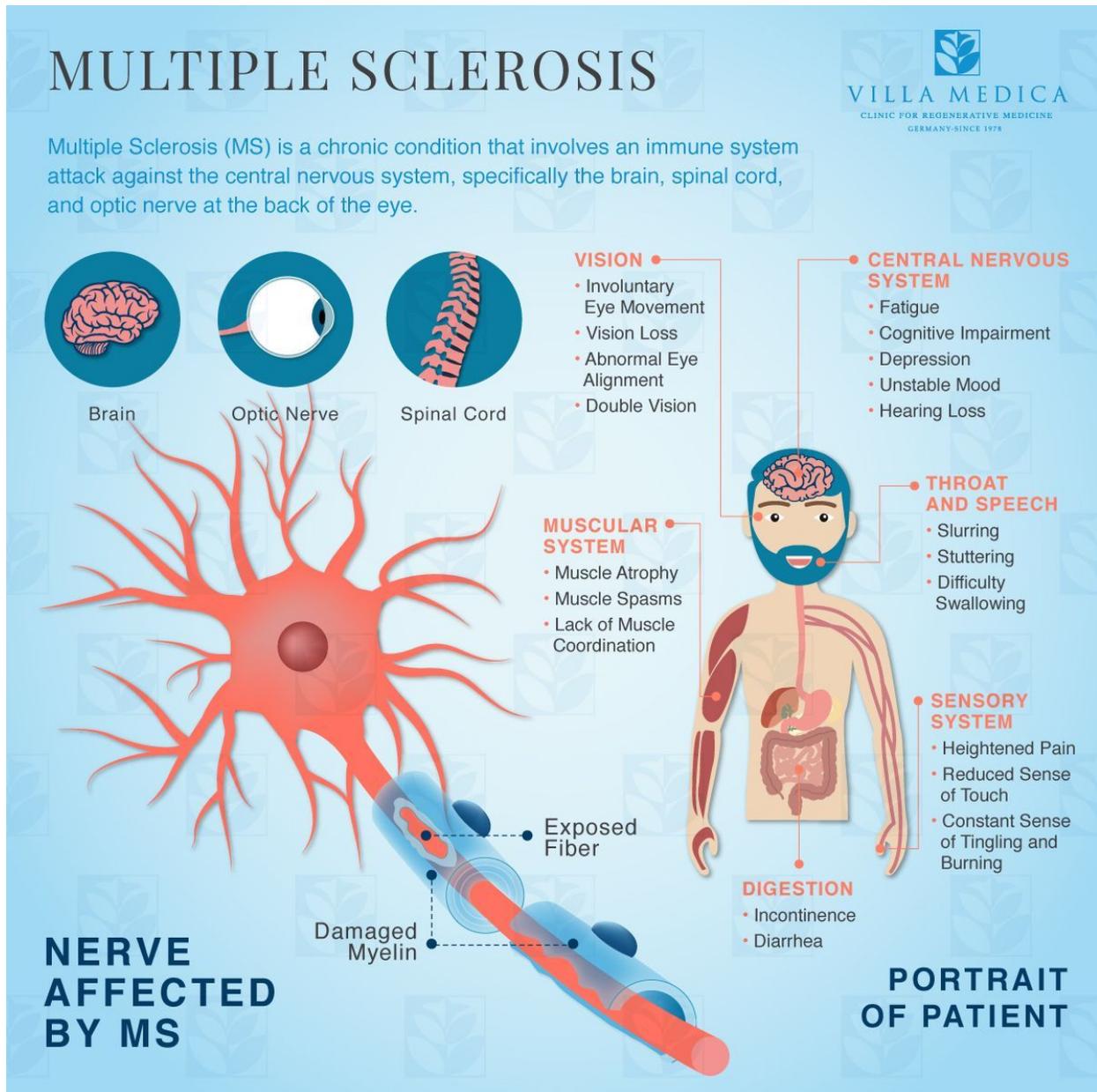


Image Credit: <https://villa-medica.com/cell-therapy-for-multiple-sclerosis/>

## Signs and Symptoms

1. Unexplained fatigue
2. Mental fogginess or confusion
3. Vision problems including seeing double or a blind spot
4. Heat intolerance
5. Pain, burning, or numbness in the face or body
6. Spasticity (muscles that will not relax)
7. Muscle weakness
8. Difficulty walking with steady, even steps

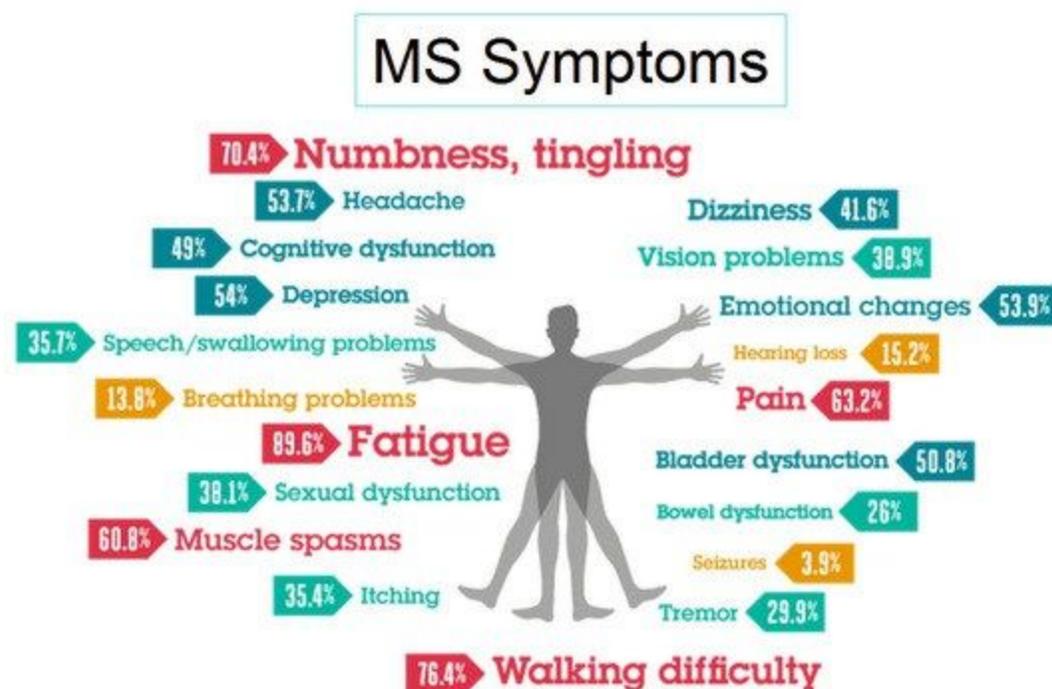


Image Credit: <http://moderndayms.com/2017/02/unusual-symptoms-multiple-sclerosis/>

## When to seek help

Multiple Sclerosis is a progressive disease that can cause decreased balance, muscle strength, and sensation. These factors may cause an increased risk of falls and have a negative impact on quality of life. It is important to seek help from your primary care

provider, physical therapist, or reach out to a local support group if you feel like Multiple Sclerosis is negatively affecting your mobility, safety, or quality of life.

## Therapeutic Strategies

### I. Energy Conservation

Fatigue is the most common symptom of Multiple Sclerosis. Multiple Sclerosis associated fatigue can occur suddenly, increases throughout the day, and is usually worsened by heat. Energy conservation techniques can be taught by physical and occupational therapists to help save energy while performing daily chores, leaving you with more energy to perform hobbies and leisure activities. One strategy to help with energy conservation is to keep a daily activity diary in order to determine which activities cause the most fatigue and help prioritize which activities are most important.

[MS Daily Activity Diary](#)

### II. Daily Exercises

To achieve health benefits and maintain physical function, individuals with Multiple Sclerosis should perform *at least*:

- ❖ 30 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise 3 times per week.
  - Examples of moderate intensity aerobic exercise include: fast walking, swimming, and tennis.
- ❖ Strength training exercises for major muscle groups 2 times per week.
  - Examples of exercises for major muscle groups include: squats, push-ups, bicep curls, and lunges.

[MS Exercise Information](#)

### III. Pain Management

If pain has started to affect your quality of life, talk to a physical therapist to discuss pain management options. One study has found that individuals with Multiple Sclerosis who receive physical therapy consume 20% less pain drugs than those who do not (Svendsen, Jensen, Overad et al., 2003).

[Physical Therapy and MS](#)

#### IV. Spasticity Reduction

If your muscles become stiff and weak, you may experience muscle spasticity. Spasticity can be treated with therapeutic treatments including stretching and positioning. Sometimes spasticity can be useful to perform daily tasks if other muscles are too weak, so it is important to talk to a physical therapist to decide which muscles to stretch and how often.

[Stretches for MS](#)

### Resources



Image Credit: <http://www.denverneuroclinic.com/ms-support-group/>

#### National

National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
<https://www.nationalmssociety.org/>  
1-800-344-4867

Multiple Sclerosis Foundation  
<https://msfocus.org/>  
support@msfocus.org  
888-MSFOCUS (673-6287)

#### Local

The Day Roanoke Valley MS Support Group  
Info@msallianceofva.org  
540-404-1167

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