

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

What is Multiple Sclerosis (MS)?

- MS is a disease that affects the brain and spinal cord.
- The nerve fibers of the brain and spinal cord are protected by myelin tissue.
- In MS, the myelin is damaged in different areas leaving scar tissue.
- The damaged nerves causes communication problems between your brain and the rest of your body. This results in the different symptoms of MS.

What causes Multiple Sclerosis?

- The exact cause of MS is unknown. It is believed that the damage to the myelin is a result from an abnormal response by the body's immune system.
- The immune system defends the body against foreign invaders. In autoimmune diseases, the body attacks its own tissue.
- MS is thought to be an autoimmune disease and myelin is the major target of that immune attack.

How is Multiple Sclerosis diagnosed?

- Diagnosing the disease often involves:
 - Symptoms: evidence from the person's history
 - Signs: examination by a doctor
 - Lab Tests: Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Evoked Potential (EP), cerebrospinal fluid sample and blood tests

How is Multiple Sclerosis Treated?

- Medications can slow down the course of the disease. Medication can prevent brain lesions, and new relapses. No medication will cure multiple sclerosis.

For Additional Information

- National Multiple Sclerosis Society – www.nationalmssociety.org

What are the common symptoms of Multiple Sclerosis?

- Fatigue
- Pain
- Heat sensitivity
- Vision changes
- Spasticity
- Memory problems
- Symptoms may appear in any combination and be mild to severe. They may be experienced for unpredictable periods of time.
- Symptoms alone do not indicate MS.