

Multiple Sclerosis

What is Multiple Sclerosis?

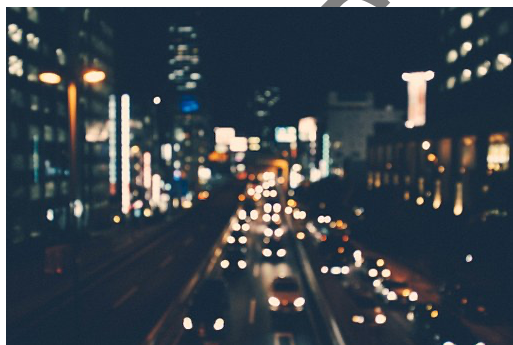
Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a **central nervous system** (CNS) disorder that inhibits mobility and may impact cognition for some patients. About **2.3 million** people worldwide suffer from MS. Symptoms of MS typically worsen over time, although each patient is affected differently by the disease. In fact, two-thirds of those with MS do not become paralyzed and never lose the ability to walk, although they may need assistance such as a wheelchair, cane, or walker. In this article, we will examine the symptoms, physiology, and treatment methods of the disease.



People with MS may need the assistance of a walker.

What are the Symptoms?

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society notes several possible negative symptoms of



People with MS may suffer from blurred vision.

MS. These symptoms include blurred vision, double vision, or blindness; slurred speech; poor balance and motor control; paralysis; tremors; numbness or weakness in limbs; tingling or pain in parts of the body; extreme fatigue; trouble concentrating; poor memory; trouble with bladder and bowel

control; and **Lhermitte sign**, electric-shock sensations that occur with certain neck movements, especially bending the neck forward. It should be noted, however, that not all patients suffering from MS experience every symptom, but rather experience variations on these symptoms.

How Does It Happen?

Reading Sample



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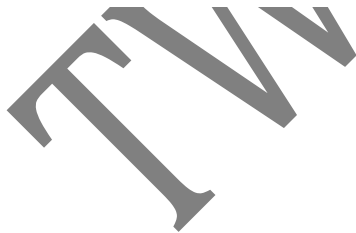
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of Northern European ancestry. In fact, research has shown that MS is diagnosed at a higher rate in those who live furthest from the equator. However, that does not mean that those who live closer to the equator cannot develop the disease.

An interesting note about MS diagnosis is that an identical twin of an individual with MS has about a 25% chance of developing the disease. This clearly shows that there is more than a genetic factor at play in the development of MS. Moreover, women are 2-3 times more likely to be diagnosed with MS than men.

Other risk factors include certain infections and diseases. Also, those with thyroid disease, type I diabetes, or inflammatory bowel syndrome have a slightly higher risk of being diagnosed with MS. However, it is unknown whether these diseases lead to a higher risk of MS or are partly caused by MS.



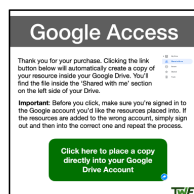
People of Northern European descent, and those who live far from the equator, are at a greater risk of developing MS.

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Fortunately, the life expectancy of those with MS has risen in recent years. However, that life expectancy is still about 7 years less than the general population. With research on MS continuing to progress, hopefully a cure will soon be found. Education on the disease will also aid patients and their families in dealing with MS in the most effective manner.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

1. How many
2. What are some of the symptoms experienced by those with MS?
3. Explain the
4. What is the significance of myelin?
5. Is
6. What effects do most medications for patients with MS have?

Extension Questions:

7. Why is
8. Perform some research online to find out the current treatments (both common and experimental). How do they work and how effective are they in treating the disease?

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