



A Roadmap for the Newly Diagnosed

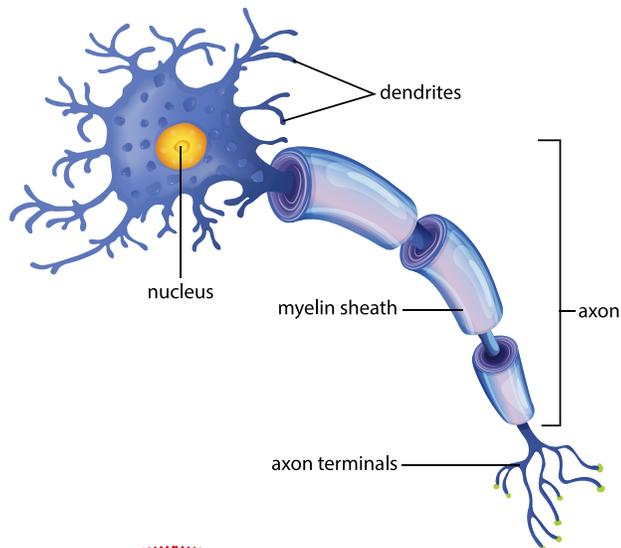
The Road to Understanding Your Diagnosis

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a disease of the central nervous system (CNS), which consists of the brain, optic nerves, and spinal cord. With MS, areas of the CNS become inflamed, damaging the protective covering (known as “myelin”) that surrounds and insulates the nerves (known as “axons”).¹

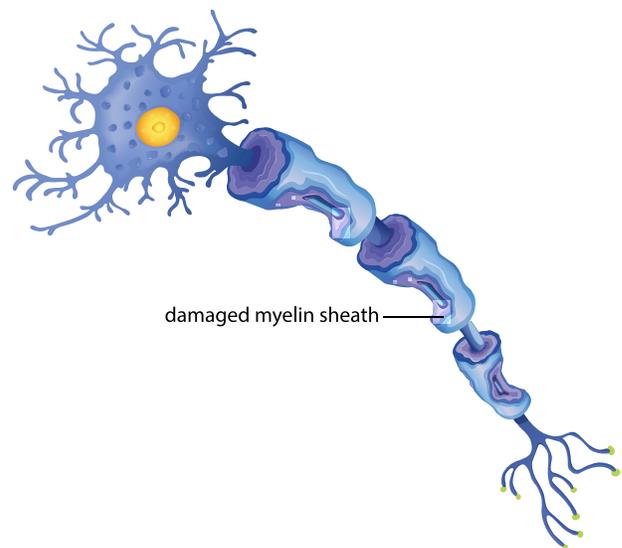
In addition to the myelin, over time, the axons and nerve cells (neurons) within the CNS may also become damaged.¹

The damage to the protective covering and the nerves disrupts the smooth flow of nerve impulses. As a result, messages from the brain and spinal cord going to other parts of the body may be delayed and have trouble reaching their destination – causing the symptoms of MS.¹

NORMAL HEALTHY NERVE CELL



MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NERVE CELL



Myelin is the insulation that covers the nerve. A healthy nerve is able to transmit signals at a very fast speed. Damage to the myelin as a result of MS causes the nerve signals to slow down.¹

When the myelin becomes damaged, signals can no longer travel across the nerve fibers efficiently. Lost or slowing signals cause the symptoms of MS, and based on their location, these signals can influence what kinds of symptoms a person might experience.¹



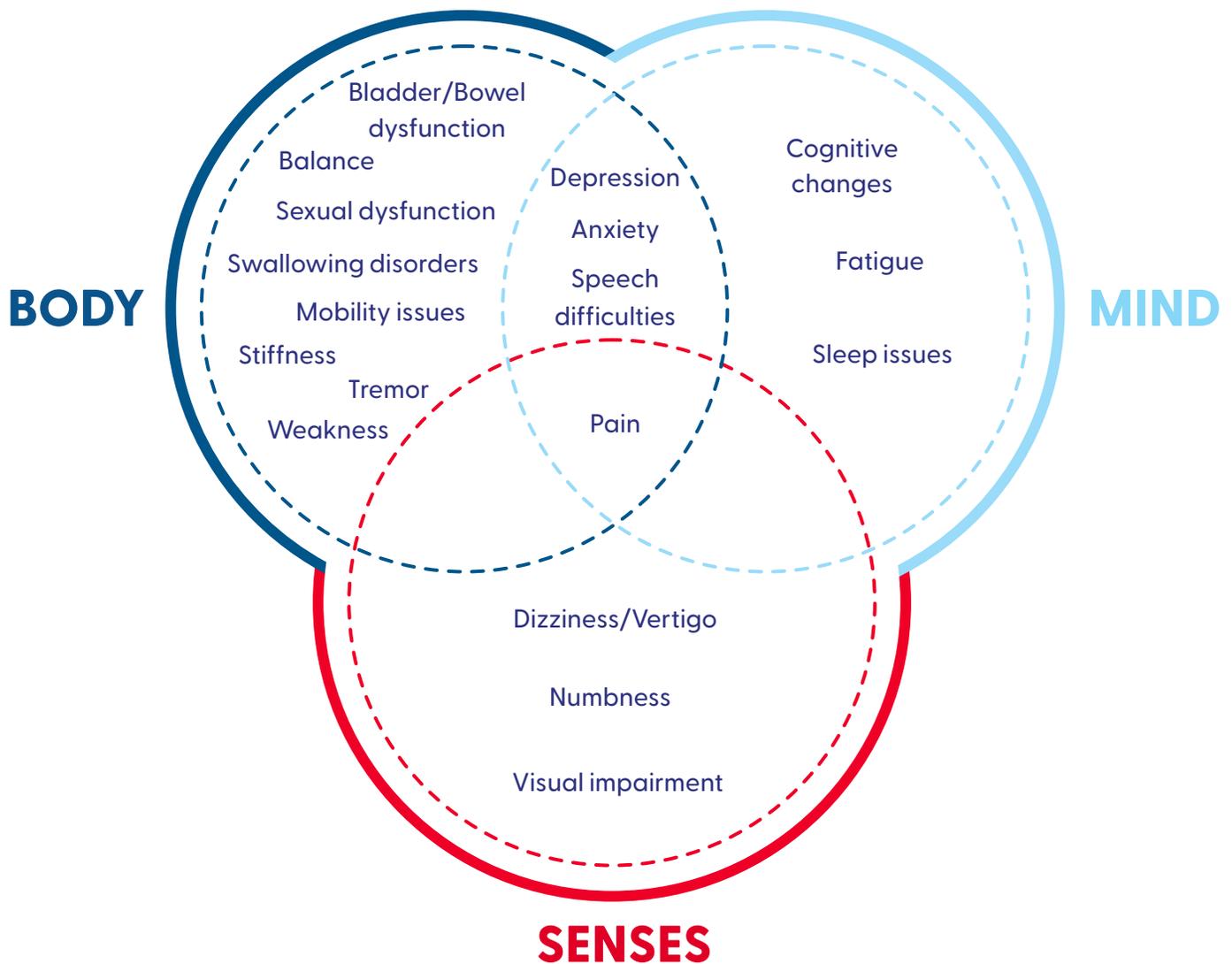
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What Can Multiple Sclerosis Look Like?

Symptoms are different for each person, and they can impact the body, mind, and senses. Some of the symptoms might fall under a number of the categories below.¹

It's important to talk to your doctor and healthcare team about what you're experiencing.¹





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Multiple sclerosis (MS) affects each person differently. There is no way to predict how MS will progress in each individual. The most common types of MS are Clinically Isolated Syndrome (CIS) and Relapses-Remitting MS (RRMS).²

Types of MS

Clinically Isolated Syndrome (CIS)

Clinically Isolated Syndrome is caused by an inflammation and demyelination (damage to the protective covering surrounding the nerve fibers) in the central nervous system and lasts at least 24 hours. Not everyone who has a clinically isolated episode will go on to develop MS. Those with CIS who are considered high risk for developing MS may be treated with a therapy shown to delay the onset of multiple sclerosis.²

Relapsing-Remitting MS (RRMS)

In the beginning, most people with MS experience symptom flare-ups, which are also known as relapses, exacerbations, or attacks. When someone experiences a relapse, they may be having new symptoms or an increase in existing symptoms. These usually persist for a short time (from a few days to a few months). Afterward, they may remain symptom-free for periods of months or years. This is known as relapsing-remitting MS.

Approximately 80 to 85 percent of people with MS are initially diagnosed with this form of the disease.²

Secondary-Progressive MS (SPMS)

Over time, relapsing-remitting MS may advance to secondary-progressive MS (SPMS). This form of MS has a slow, steady progression – with or without relapses. If relapses do occur, they usually do not entirely suspend. However, with the introduction of long-term disease-modifying therapies (DMTs), fewer individuals advance to this later form of the disease.

Without treatment, approximately half of individuals with RRMS advance to SPMS within ten years.²

Primary-Progressive MS (PPMS)

Primary-progressive MS (PPMS) is where individuals experience a steady worsening of symptoms from the start and do not have periodic relapses and remissions. Individuals who are not initially diagnosed with RRMS may experience a steadier disease progression from the onset.

Approximately 10 to 15 percent of the MS population is diagnosed with PPMS.²



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In my own words, multiple sclerosis is...

Three things that surprised me to learn about multiple sclerosis were:

References

1. Multiple Sclerosis Process and Symptoms. Multiple Sclerosis Association of America. Updated April 6, 2020. Accessed August 2021. <https://mymsaa.org/ms-information/overview/process-symptoms>
2. Types of Multiple Sclerosis. National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Accessed August 2021. <https://www.nationalmssociety.org/What-is-MS/Types-of-MS>