Title: Multiple Sclerosis: Diagnosis, Treatment and Risk

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Abstract: Vitamin D is a cheap, relatively safe, dietary supplement that in doses greater than 400IU per day may lower the risk of developing MS by as much as 40%.

More Resources:

Multiple Sclerosis Association of America
706 Haddonfield Road
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
webmaster@msaa.com
http://www.msassociation.org
Tel: 856-488-4500 800-532-7667
Fax: 856-661-9797

Multiple Sclerosis Foundation
6350 North Andrews Avenue
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309-2130
support@msfocus.org
http://www.msfocus.org
Tel: 954-776-6805 888-MSFOCUS (673-6287)
Fax: 954-351-0630

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
733 Third Avenue
3rd Floor
New York, NY 10017-3288
nat@nmss.org
http://www.nationalmssociety.org
Tel: 212-986-3240 800-344-4867 (FIGHTMS)
Fax: 212-986-7981

Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis
300 Fifth Avenue
Waltham, MA 02451
info-web0508@acceleratedcure.org
http://www.acceleratedcure.org
Tel: 781-487-0008
Fax: 781-487-0009

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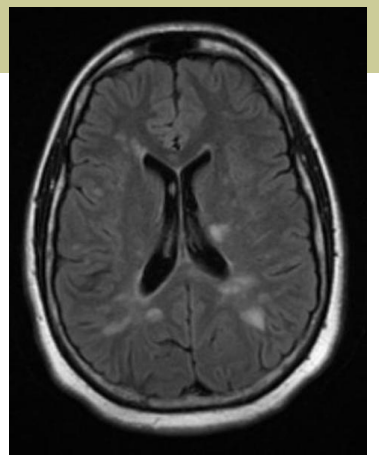
Multiple Sclerosis

Diagnosis, Treatment & Risk Factors



Information for Patients

What is Multiple Sclerosis?

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable, chronic, often progressive disease that involves the brain and spinal cord. It is thought that MS is an autoimmune disease, where the body's immune system attacks its own tissues. In people with MS, their bodies are attacking the insulation of the nerves of the central nervous system called myelin.

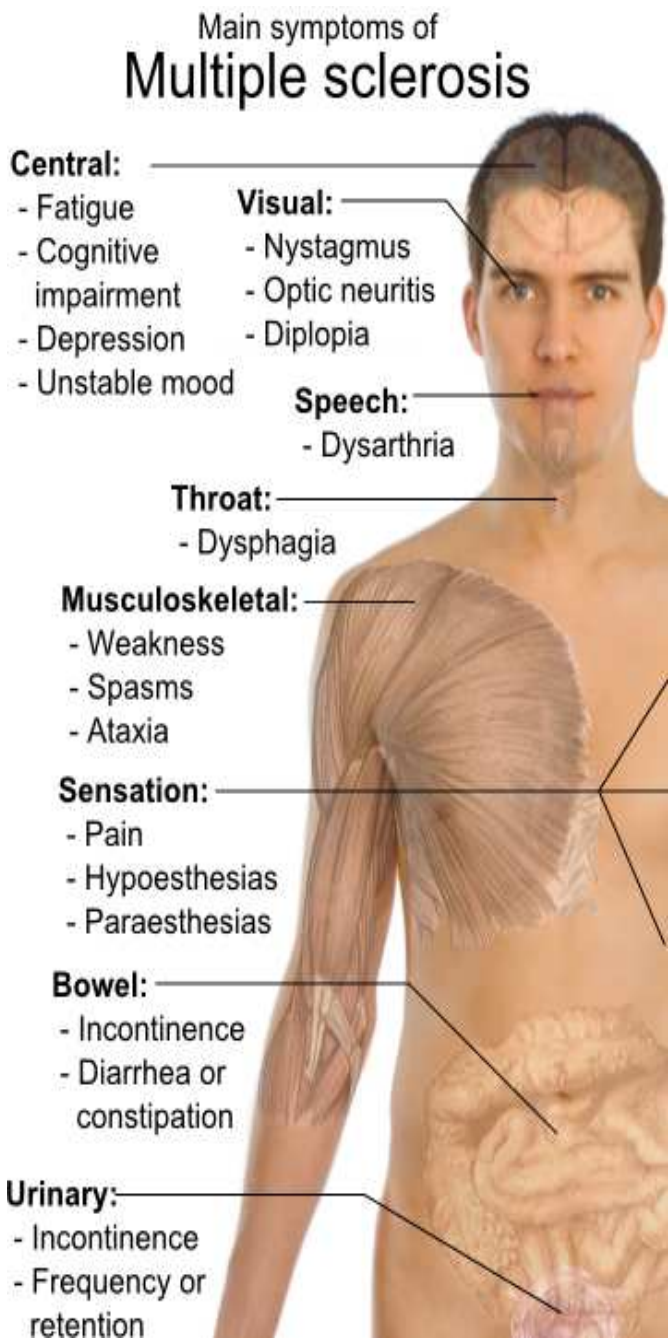
What are the Symptoms of MS?

Most people first develop symptoms associated with MS in their 20s-40s. Initial symptoms can often be vague and transient, but may involve blurred or double vision, red-green distortion or even blindness. Other symptoms can involve virtually any part of the body: muscle weakness or paralysis, feelings of burning or numbness, trouble with urination, depression and fatigue.

How is MS Diagnosed?

To be diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, a physician must find evidence of damage in at least two different areas of the central nervous system, the repeat damage must have occurred at least one month apart, and all other possible diagnoses must be ruled out.

Physicians may use imaging techniques such as MRI, and perform a lumbar puncture to test cerebrospinal fluid for evidence of MS.



Who is at Risk to get MS?

Multiple Sclerosis is thought to affect over 400,000 people in the United States, and around 2.5 million worldwide.

Women are three times as likely to be affected by MS.

The risk of developing MS to the general population is 1/750, this risk is increased to 1/40 if a person has a parent or sibling with MS.

Most ethnicities can be afflicted, but MS is most common in Caucasians of Northern European descent.

MS is more common the further away from the equator you live.

How is MS Treated?

While a cure for MS has yet to be discovered, there are several treatments that have been shown to decrease the severity of exacerbations and may delay progression of the disease. Treatments include:

- Beta Interferons
  - Avonex
  - Betaseron
  - Rebif
- Synthetic Myelin Basic Protein
  - Copaxone
- Immunosuppressant
  - Novantrone
- Monoclonal Antibody
  - Tysabri

Other therapies are used to treat symptoms related to MS including corticosteroids, muscle relaxants, antidepressants and physical therapy.