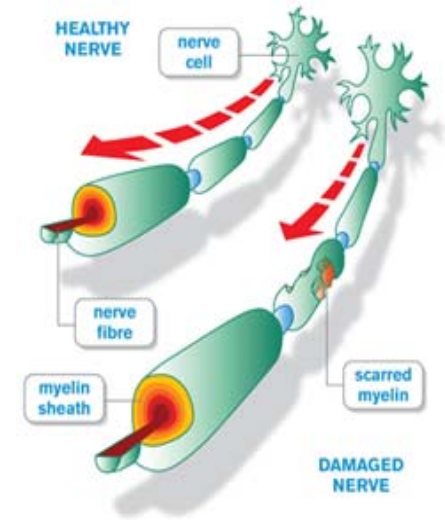


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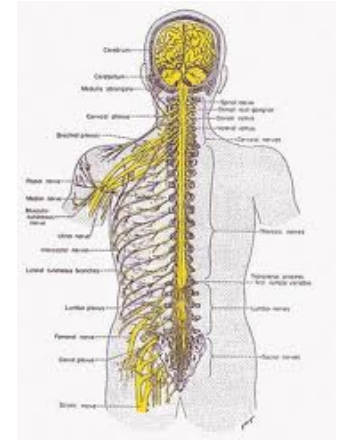
Wellington
Multiple
Sclerosis
Society Inc.



Living with Multiple Sclerosis

What is Multiple Sclerosis?

- Autoimmune condition affecting the central nervous system
- Causing demyelination of the nerve fibre
- Leading to hardening of the tissues (sclerosis) occurring in a number of sites in the brain (multiple)
- Affecting different neural pathways eg optical, muscular skeletal, bladder and/or bowel.



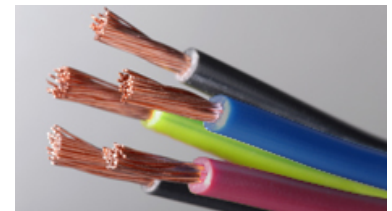
Prevalence

- Around 1 in every 1000 people in NZ have MS
- It's normally diagnosed in people between the ages of 20 and 40, and affects almost twice as many women as men.
- In New Zealand the prevalence of MS is greater the further south you go.

What types of MS are there?

In general three typical patterns of MS can be recognised:

- Relapsing-remitting MS—relapses with a flare up of old symptoms or the development of new ones (over several days or weeks) are followed by a remission with resolution or reduction of symptoms.
- Secondary-progressive MS—after an initial course of relapsing/remitting MS, there is the development of slowly progressive disability (over several years). In this phase relapses may also still occur.
- Primary-progressive MS—in about 10% of cases, right from the beginning there is slow progressive worsening of symptoms and disability without distinct attacks.



Symptoms of MS

- The symptoms range broadly
- They can be very different from one person to another.
- Some people will only experience mild symptoms and others may be extreme.
- Most symptoms of MS usually occur in a pattern of relapse followed by a period of remission.

Symptoms, and how they affect your day

Symptoms may include any number of the following:

- Sensory symptoms such as numbness, tingling
- Vision problems
- Fatigue
- Muscle spasm/stiffness/weakness/heaviness
- Memory/concentration issues
- Emotional/mood implication eg depression/anxiety

Other symptoms that may be experienced include:

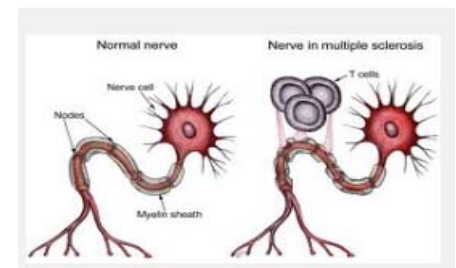
Bladder & Bowel issues

Sexual issues

Balance issues

Speech slurring

Neuralgia (pain)



Support links to Wellbeing

A person's General Practitioner is the primary Healthcare provider, however other links include:

MS Field Workers – Field Workers can help provide referrals to Neurology, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and other Allied Health services.

Field Workers provide information and advocacy to people and families/whanau with MS and link people into Support Groups.



Living with MS

Introducing Duilia Rendall and Peter North who have MS and have kindly offered to share their experiences with us.

