

# At any age: Key facts about pediatric MS

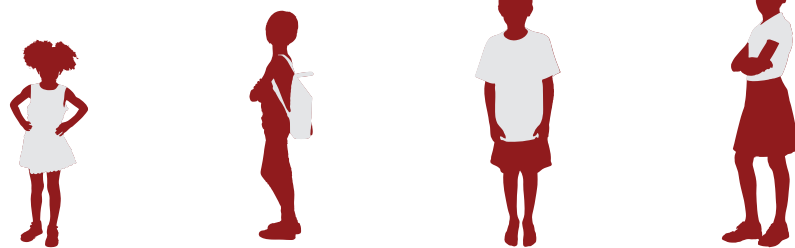
Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a **chronic disorder** of the central nervous system that disrupts the normal functioning of the brain, optic nerves and spinal cord through inflammation and tissue loss.<sup>1</sup>

**~2.3 MILLION**

people worldwide are affected by MS, of which **3–5%** are estimated to be children.<sup>2,3</sup>

**12–18 YEARS**

Pediatric MS is most commonly diagnosed during adolescence.<sup>4</sup>



Approximately **98%** of people with pediatric MS have **relapsing-remitting MS (RRMS)**.<sup>4</sup>

Compared to adults, children and adolescents have more active disease with **two-to-three times** as many relapses.<sup>6</sup>

RRMS is the form of the disease characterized by **attacks (relapses)** with worsening symptoms, followed by periods of remission where patients can partially or fully recover.<sup>5</sup>

Those with pediatric MS progress to secondary-progressive MS, a highly disabling form of MS, on average **10 years earlier** than those diagnosed as adults.<sup>4</sup>

## Pediatric MS affects:



**Mobility, balance and co-ordination** leading to muscle weakness, walking difficulties and tremors.<sup>2</sup>



**Cognitive function (e.g. memory)**, with **30%** of patients experiencing **significant cognitive impairment**, which can affect attention, performance at school, and relationships with family and friends.<sup>7,8</sup>



**Sensation**, causing numbness, tingling, dizziness and visual problems.<sup>2</sup>



The debilitating symptoms of pediatric MS **limit patients' ability to go about everyday activities**, like going to school.<sup>9</sup>

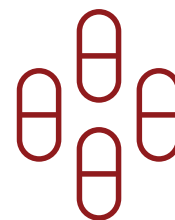
The consequences of MS seriously affect academic performance in **over a third** of children.<sup>9</sup>



Symptoms can be difficult for children and adolescents to come to terms with, often causing aggression, depression and anxiety; **50% of patients show signs of depression** within the first two years of disease onset.<sup>9,10</sup>



Pediatric MS **affects the whole family**, including family interactions and dynamic, as everyone learns how to live with this chronic disease.<sup>9</sup>



Currently, there are **no specifically approved disease-modifying therapies for pediatric MS**; currently used treatments have been **evaluated in direct comparison trials** specifically designed for children and adolescents.<sup>11</sup>

**New treatments are urgently needed to improve the lives and long-term outlook of children and adolescents with MS.**

### References

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