



# HEALTH AWARENESS

## Managing Multiple Sclerosis

(NAPSA)—If you or someone you care about is ever among the 200 people who learn they have multiple sclerosis (MS) every week, science may have good news for you. For one thing, most MS patients have a normal or near-normal life expectancy. What's more, the majority of MS patients do not become severely disabled.

According to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, MS is a chronic, unpredictable neurological disease that affects the central nervous system. It generally has four phases, with the most common being the "relapsing-remitting" phase, in which patients experience flare-ups followed by recovery periods. MS can be difficult to diagnose because symptoms are unpredictable. Some people go years without noticeable symptoms.

While there is yet no cure for MS, there are FDA-approved medications that have been shown to "modify" or slow down the underlying cause of MS. More good news is on the horizon. America's pharmaceutical research companies are working on 547 new medicines to treat neurological disorders, including MS.

In addition to medication, certain lifestyle choices may help patients better manage MS. Physical and occupational therapy can help build strength and teach patients how to use tools to assist in everyday tasks. Counseling can help people with MS find strength and understanding while talking to a professional therapist or other patients. Reaching out to friends, family and others in the



**Pharmaceutical research companies are working on hundreds of new medicines to treat neurological disorders.**

MS community can help.

For people with a story to share about their battle against MS, [www.sharingmiracles.com](http://www.sharingmiracles.com) can inspire and motivate patients coping with MS and other diseases.

For those who need help affording prescription medicines, Partnership for Prescription Assistance (1-888-4PPA-NOW or [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org)), sponsored by America's pharmaceutical research companies, provides a single point of access to information on more than 475 patient assistance programs. More than 2,500 brand-name and generic prescription medicines are available through the participating programs that have already helped nearly 5 million people nationwide.

For more information on new medicines now being developed to fight neurological disorders by America's pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical research companies, visit [www.PhrMA.org](http://www.PhrMA.org).

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*Editor's Note: While this article is useful at any time, it may be particularly appropriate to run during March, which is Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month.*