



# Campaign Essentials

navigating**MS**together



## About World MS Day

**World MS Day is an international awareness day for everyone affected by multiple sclerosis. It is a day of global solidarity, collective action and hope.**

In 2009, the MS International Federation (MSIF) and its members initiated the first World MS Day. Together we have reached thousands of people around the world, focusing on a range of campaign themes.

World MS Day is officially marked on 30 May. Events and campaigns take place throughout the month of May. It brings together the global MS community to share stories, raise awareness and campaign with and for everyone affected by MS.



## What is MS?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is one of the most common diseases of the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). Today, there are more than 2.8 million people around the world who have MS.

MS is an inflammatory demyelinating condition. It is caused by damage to myelin – a fatty material that insulates nerves. In MS, the loss of myelin affects the way nerves conduct electrical impulses to and from the brain. Symptoms vary widely and can include blurred vision, weak limbs, tingling sensations, unsteadiness, memory problems, and fatigue.

Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40. There is no drug that can cure MS, but treatments are available which can modify the course of the disease.

To find out more about MS, you can get in touch with an MS organisation near you or visit the [MSIF website](#).



# The My MS Diagnosis Campaign

The theme for World MS Day 2024-2025 is diagnosis. The name of the campaign is My MS Diagnosis and the tagline: Navigating MS together.

The My MS Diagnosis campaign advocates for early and accurate diagnosis for everyone living with MS. It highlights the global barriers to diagnosing MS, raising awareness by sharing real stories and data. We are calling for better MS training for healthcare professionals, new research, and clinical advancements in MS diagnosis. Together we are building informed, caring communities and systems that support people diagnosed with MS.



## Campaign Angles

**My MS Diagnosis is a flexible theme. Whether you're individual or an organisation, you can choose to focus on a variety of angles for World MS Day, including:**

**Lobbying decision makers** to improve early and accurate diagnosis for everyone living with MS

**Highlighting global and national barriers** to accessing an MS diagnosis

**Building informed, caring communities and systems** that support people diagnosed with MS

**Raising awareness and building solidarity** by sharing experiences of an MS diagnosis

**Advocating for better MS training and awareness** amongst healthcare professionals

**Supporting new research and clinical advancements** in MS diagnosis



# Did you know?

## Early diagnosis vital

An early diagnosis is vital to enable early treatment with disease modifying therapies that can minimise relapses and reduce future disability. Diagnosis also allows for lifestyle changes to help manage MS and improve quality of life.

## Every 5mins

Every 5 minutes, someone, somewhere in the world is diagnosed with MS.

## 30k children

MS affects children as well as adults, with at least 30,000 people under 18 living with MS.

## 2.8m people

There are more than 2.8 million people living with MS around the world.

## Twice as many females

There are at least twice as many females (69%) with MS as there are males (31%).

## 83% of countries

83% of countries worldwide experience issues that prevent an early diagnosis of MS.

## No simple test

Neurologists typically use multiple tests to rule out alternative causes of symptoms before giving an MS diagnosis.



# Barriers to an early MS diagnosis

**The majority (83%) of countries worldwide have barriers that prevent early diagnosis of MS. Some of the common barriers that stand in the way of diagnosis include:**

- Lack of public awareness of MS symptoms
- Lack of awareness of MS symptoms among healthcare professionals
- No healthcare professionals available with knowledge to diagnose MS
- People not taking diagnostic tests e.g. due to costs or travel limitations
- Specialist medical equipment or diagnostic tests are not available
- Bureaucracy, inefficiency, complexity in the health system
- Diagnosis is too expensive for a government or insurance provider to fund

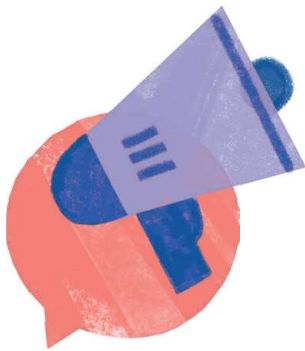
Globally the most common barrier to getting an early diagnosis is a lack of awareness of MS symptoms among the public and healthcare professionals. To learn more about the barriers to accessing an early MS diagnosis read the [Atlas of MS Clinical Management Report](#).





# Take Action

There are lots of different ways to take part in the campaign! Here are a few ideas to get you started.



## Join the conversation

Create a buzz with the toolkit of free [resources](#) on the World MS Day website. Share graphics, posters, animation and more to get people talking about the campaign. Use the hashtags #MyMSDiagnosis and #WorldMSDay hashtags when posting on social media. If you've been diagnosed with MS, you can help raise awareness by sharing your story on the [World MS Day map](#).



## Organise an Activity

Organise an activity this World MS Day. From flashmobs and fundraisers to conferences and workshops – don't be afraid to get creative and make some noise! You can visit the World MS Day map to see the global MS community in action and share your activities with the world.



## Advocate for Change

World MS Day is used to engage decision makers and make things better for people living with MS. Think about the changes you want to see and how you can influence leaders in your government and community. You can use data from the [Atlas of MS](#) to highlight barriers that prevent early and accurate MS diagnosis. Visit the [MSIF website](#) for information on how we can improve MS diagnosis.

# Take Action



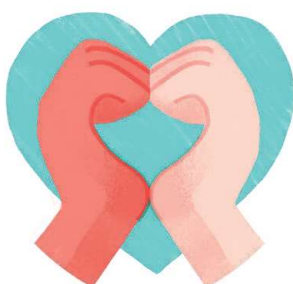
## Make Headlines

Get World MS Day covered in the news. Raise awareness, share real stories, and highlight the key issues around MS diagnosis. You could write an article, post a blog, contact local journalists, or even run a press conference.



## Light Up the World

Light up iconic landmarks, and buildings on World MS Day as a statement of hope in your city. Unite with countries across the world as we illuminate skylines together for MS.



## MS Heart Challenge

Show your support somewhere special by sharing an MS Heart for World MS Day. Inspired by a sign language symbol for the word 'together', the MS Heart is a symbol of solidarity with everyone affected by MS. Connect your hands together, and share an MS heart photo next to a national landmark, favourite local spot or significant event. The best submissions will receive a World MS Day Certificate!



**World MS Day is coordinated by the  
MS International Federation and its members.**

If you have any questions or need help please  
contact [worldmsday@msif.org](mailto:worldmsday@msif.org). For the latest  
news and updates sign up to the World MS Day  
newsletter at <https://worldmsday.org/newsletter/>

[worldmsday.org](https://worldmsday.org)

   **WorldMSDay**