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# WELCOME

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this edition of Las Vegas Community Healthcare Magazine, where our journey through the realms of health, society, and interconnectedness takes a profound turn. In this issue, we delve into the intricacies of Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a condition where the body's immune system inexplicably turns against its own nervous system, particularly targeting the protective sheath, or myelin, that cloaks our nerve fibers. This act of self-sabotage disrupts the seamless flow of communication between the brain and the body, leading to a myriad of physical and neurological challenges.

But what if we viewed MS not just as a medical condition but as a metaphor, a poignant reflection of the times we live in? Just as MS represents a breakdown in the cellular communication that is vital for our bodily functions, we are witnessing a parallel disruption in the communication within our communities. In an era where dialogue is often fragmented by the noise of misinformation, polarizing opinions, and the echo chambers of social media, the essence of true communication seems to be eroding.

The human body, much like a well-structured community, relies on the constant, harmonious exchange of information to thrive. In MS, when the messages between the brain and the body become garbled or lost, the results can be debilitating. Similarly, when our societal connections are weakened by misunderstanding, prejudice, or indifference, the fabric of our community suffers.

This issue of [Magazine Name] is a call to action. Just as scientists and doctors tirelessly seek to understand and mend the communication pathways disrupted by MS, we must also strive to restore the channels of understanding and empathy that bind us as a community. Through a blend of science, stories, and strategies, we aim to explore the power of communication — not only in navigating the challenges of MS but in overcoming the divides that distance us from one another.

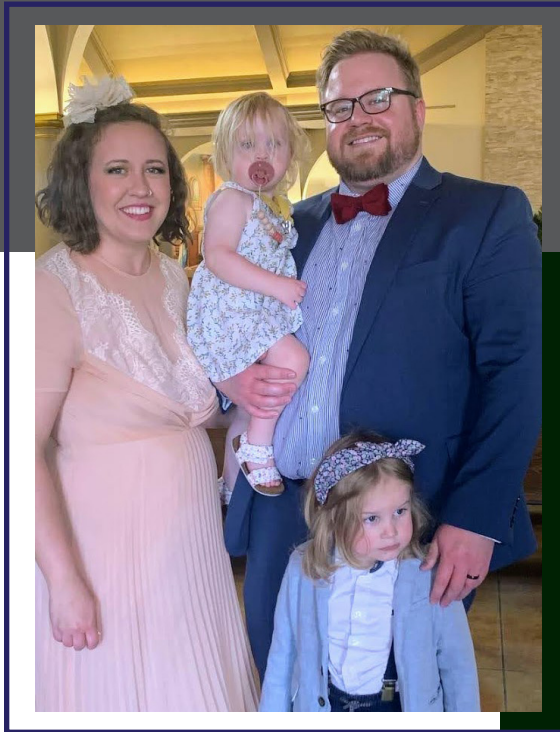
Together, we can confront the breakdown in communication, whether it occurs within our bodies or within our society, and work towards a future where every voice is heard, and every message is received with clarity and compassion.



**Diego A. Trujillo**  
CEO of Las Vegas HEALS

# PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT & INTERVIEW

## Taylor Campbell, DO



*"Doctors demonstrate leadership by making an effort to branch out and work together with other providers to create medical systems that help guide patients and improve the effectiveness of their care."*

**What is your job title and what do you do?**

I am a chief neurology resident at Valley Hospital Medical Center. In addition to caring for patients at the hospital and in the clinic at Las Vegas Neurology Center, I am also responsible for overseeing junior residents in our program, and assisting in some of the organizational aspects of the residency program. This year is also an important time for me to submit posters and publications I've been working on, and to prepare for the Neurology Board Exam.

**What brought you to start practicing medicine in Las Vegas?**

I grew up in southern California with lots of family in Utah, so naturally Las Vegas is a place I passed through and visited quite a bit. My initial goal even before starting medical school was to become a neurosurgeon, but during that pursuit I found that neurology included the parts I enjoyed about treating people's brain and nerves, but the lifestyle was better for my family and me. When I began looking for a neurology residency, I had the opportunity to talk to the program director, Dr. Janda, and quickly fell in love with what Las Vegas has to offer. The patient population is in dire need of more dedicated providers and improved medical systems. It's exciting to be here to see the progress occurring, such as Valley Hospital becoming a Comprehensive Stroke Center, or the new Southern Hills neurology program bringing new residents to Las Vegas.

**What are some of the biggest challenges you face and what do you most enjoy about your job?**

The people in Las Vegas face many barriers to obtaining healthcare, and as an advocate for my patients, I face these challenges as well. There is a shortage of providers both in primary care and specialties of all kinds, so the length of time to

receive care can be overwhelming. As a resident, it's exciting to learn about many new innovative treatments as they're released, but it can be just as disappointing to find that a lot of new treatments aren't locally available, or to struggle to get them approved by insurance. I have also been on the patient side of things at times, so I'm quite familiar with how disoriented and helpless it can feel. As a provider, one of my priorities is to help patients and their families understand their diagnosis and feel involved in decision-making. Although I can't control many of the health problems people face, I feel very satisfied when patients tell me that I helped them learn about the problem and regain some control over their situation.

**What does leadership in the Southern Nevada medical community look like to you?**

Doctors demonstrate leadership by making an effort to branch out and work together with other providers to create medical systems that help guide patients and improve the effectiveness of their care. Just the usual workload of a physician is a lot to bear, so taking on additional responsibility takes initiative and commitment. Leadership doesn't always mean being in charge; to me, leadership means taking the next step and helping to build something bigger than yourself.

**What is your perspective on the future of medicine in Southern Nevada?**

Compared to other regions with a similar population and infrastructure, Las Vegas has a long way to go in terms of medical care. However, Southern Nevada is making a lot of progress, and it's encouraging to see steps being taken in the right direction. There are many providers who come here because of the opportunity to help numerous patients with compounded diseases. The people who dedicate themselves to this community know there's a lot of work to be done, and as long as we work together, I know we can bring Las Vegas to the forefront of medical standards.

*"I don't feel that it is necessary to know exactly what I am. The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning."*

*~Michel Foucault*



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## ASP Cares Pharmacy

501 S Rancho Dr G46, Las Vegas, NV 89106



**Interview with:**

**Tak Upshur, Senior Territory Manager with ASP Cares Pharmacy**  
**Christopher Reynolds, Director of HIV Services, ASP Cares Pharmacy**  
**Christian Claros, RN, Owner of eMediate Infusion Center**

**Tell us a little about your business and your role within that business?**

**Chris:** ASP Cares Pharmacy is based out of Farmer's Branch Texas and was started in 2010. It grew throughout Texas and then expanded to Las Vegas in 2016. Our vision is to keep patient care a priority in all that we do and be a one stop pharmacy solution. ASP Cares pledges to work in collaboration with providers and payers to make the prescription process as easy and cost-effective as possible for all parties involved.

**Tak:** At ASP Cares Pharmacy, we provide all the medications and IV Infusion Medications. The eMediate Infusion Center is located within walking distance of the pharmacy and once the patients have their medications, they can schedule them for Infusion Therapy.

**Christian:** At eMediate Infusion Center, we specialize in specialty infusion. ASP Cares Pharmacy takes care of the medication side, while we take care of the infusion side. As an infusion center, our main goal is to be patient first.

**What products or services do you offer companies or individuals here in Southern Nevada?**

**Chris:** Our services are patient-centered. One of the biggest things we provide is free home delivery for patients. We are open six days a week, we provide free home delivery all six days. We also offer prior authorization assistance, patient assistance and co-pay assistance. If we have a patient with a high co-pay, we work with a foundation to help cover those costs. We have a multilingual staff. If someone has a prescription and prefers it to be dispensed in their language, we can do that.

Other services include refill reminders and coordination, easy prescription transfers, HIV PEP & PrEP Navigation. We also provide 340B contract pharmacy services, Infusion therapy with eMediate Infusion Center, Workers Comp, Personal Injury/ LOP, and Med Syncing.

**How long have you been in business and what accomplishments are you most proud of?**

**Chris:** ASP Cares has been in business since 2010, but the location here in Las Vegas has been operating since 2016. One of the greatest things we are proud of is the number of patients we have helped with our services and the partnerships we have built and maintained along the way, including the partnership with eMediate Infusion Center.

**What does leadership in the Southern Nevada medical community look like to you and what can we be doing better?**

**Christian:** When you talk about leadership, my main goal is giving the patient a voice for their care. I always tell the patient to be their own advocate. That is one of the reasons why we opened this infusion center to be patient-centered.

**Chris:** I think the leadership is getting stronger, but it is still fractured or siloed at times. It should be more about helping patients and less about profit. People will often say there is a nursing shortage or a doctor shortage. When you talk to medical schools, there is no shortage, but we can't keep people here. We need to look at how to expand access points and how to keep providers here.



***"If we have a patient with a high co-pay, we work with a foundation to help cover those costs."***



# CLARK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY 2024 RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM WINNERS



## RESIDENT / FELLOW CATEGORY

**First Place - Arman Kakosian, MD**, "Logistical and Financial Implications of Treating Acutely Suicidal Patients with IV Ketamine in the Emergency Department"

**Second Place - Emily Shaffer, MD, MPHTM**, "Impact of Maternal Biologic Drug Screens on Time to Treatment for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome in Newborns"

**Third Place (tie) - Jeffrey DeGrauw, DO**, "Using Double Sided Bronchial Blocker for Differential Lung Ventilation for Robotic Bronchoscopy Guided Marking and Subsequent Bilateral Lung Wedge Resections and Lobectomy"

**Third Place (tie) - Julian Shih, MD**, "1001 Units of Insulin: A Case of Type B Insulin Resistance"

## MEDICAL STUDENT CATEGORY

**First Place - Charlton Bassett, MS-II**, "MicroRNA-145 Downstream Signaling Pathways as Potential Mediators of Neural Differentiation in Dental Pulp Stem Cells"

**Second Place (tie) - Melanie Arslanian, OMS-II**, "Slow Binding of a Heterocyclic Pharmacophore against Kinases from Eukaryotic Pathogens"

**Second Place (tie) - Kian Habashi, MS-III**, "Improved Advanced Care Planning in Geriatric Hip Fractures"

**Third Place (tie) - Hunter Triplett, MS-II**, "The Role of MicroRNA-27 as a Mediator of Neural Differentiation Signaling Pathways Among Dental Pulp Stem Cells Through Downstream Targets"

**Third Place (tie) - Julianne Zhou, OMS-I**, "Alimentary Microsporidiosis: Clinical Manifestations and Management"

**Best Case Presentation - Meghana Pandit, OMS-III**, "Neurological Sequelae of Anti-NMDAR Encephalitis in the Presence of an Immature Ovarian Teratoma: A Case Report"

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Established in 1955, the Clark County Medical Society (CCMS) is a professional organization of nearly 2,000 doctors, medical residents, physician's assistants and medical students. The organization advocates for physicians and their patients in Southern Nevada, encouraging the delivery of quality health care within the community.

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## **What do you see for the future of healthcare in Southern Nevada?**

**Chris:** I think the future is getting better because we are starting to engage in more partnerships and more access points. We want to keep looking at how to expand those. We tell people that Las Vegas is a 24-hour city but our medical services are only open 9-5. We need nontraditional hours to serve people here in southern Nevada.

**Christian:** We are open seven days a week and extend our services with telemedicine during nontraditional hours. For example, they can call at 3 a.m., and I can walk them through their questions and needs. Those are the services we are providing to increase access.

## **How long have you been a member of HEALS? Why did you first join HEALS?**

**Tak:** We've been a member since September 2022. The reason that our pharmacy joined HEALS is because of the networking opportunities, connecting with others, and being able to make a difference in Las Vegas.

**Chris:** What is really great about being a member, is that not only do we have access to other people but it's also a learning process working together to make healthcare better in this community.

## **Last Thoughts?**

**Chris:** We see the rising costs of healthcare and we need to work together to lower those costs for people. There are still people asking, "do I eat, do I pay rent, or do I get medication?" We are also still reeling from the recent cyber attack in healthcare. There are numerous hospitals and pharmacies that can't do eligibility checks, coupons, or billing. Some healthcare workers have not been paid. We need to keep up with technology to keep our systems secure.

***"If we have a patient with a high co-pay, we work with a foundation to help cover those costs."***



***"Our services are patient-centered. One of the biggest things we provide is free home delivery for patients."***



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# What is Multiple Sclerosis?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic autoimmune disease that affects the central nervous system (CNS), which includes the brain and spinal cord. In MS, the immune system mistakenly attacks the protective covering of nerve fibers (myelin), leading to inflammation, damage, and scarring (sclerosis) of the myelin sheath. This disrupts the communication between the brain and the rest of the body, resulting in a wide range of symptoms such as fatigue, difficulty walking, numbness or weakness in limbs, vision problems, and various cognitive and emotional changes.

The exact cause of multiple sclerosis is not fully understood, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic, environmental, and immunological factors. Some potential triggers or risk factors include viral infections, vitamin D deficiency, smoking, and certain genetic predispositions.

MS is a complex condition with varying degrees of severity and progression among individuals. Treatment typically focuses on managing symptoms, slowing disease progression, and improving quality of life through medications, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and other supportive measures.

## What Causes Multiple Sclerosis?

*The exact cause of multiple sclerosis (MS) is not fully understood, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic, environmental, and immunological factors. Here are some key factors thought to contribute to the development of MS:*

**Immune system dysfunction:** MS is considered an autoimmune disease, meaning that the body's immune system mistakenly attacks its tissues. In the case of MS, the immune system attacks the myelin sheath, the protective covering of nerve fibers in the central nervous system (CNS), which includes the brain and spinal cord. This immune system dysfunction leads to inflammation, damage, and scarring (sclerosis) of the myelin, disrupting nerve signaling.

**Genetics:** There is evidence to suggest that genetics play a role in the development of MS. Although no single gene has been identified as the cause of MS, certain genetic variations may increase susceptibility to the disease. Individuals with a close relative (such as a parent or sibling) with MS have a higher risk of developing the condition themselves.



**Environmental factors:** Environmental factors may also contribute to the development of MS, although their precise role is not fully understood. Factors such as viral infections (such as Epstein-Barr virus), vitamin D deficiency, smoking, and certain dietary factors have been studied as potential triggers or risk factors for MS.

**Geographical factors:** MS prevalence varies geographically, with higher rates observed in certain regions, particularly those farther from the equator. This suggests that environmental factors such as sunlight exposure (and consequently, vitamin D levels) may play a role in MS risk.

**Other factors:** Other factors that may contribute to MS risk include hormonal changes (such as those that occur during puberty or pregnancy) and certain lifestyle factors (such as obesity or lack of physical activity).

It's important to note that while these factors may increase the risk of developing MS, they do not guarantee that someone will develop the condition. MS is a complex disease with multiple contributing factors, and further research is needed to fully understand its underlying causes.



# MS First Symptoms

The symptoms of multiple sclerosis (MS) can vary widely from person to person, and the first symptoms experienced can also differ. Some common early symptoms of MS may include:

**Fatigue:** Many individuals with MS experience overwhelming fatigue that is not necessarily relieved by rest.

**Vision problems:** Optic neuritis, inflammation of the optic nerve, can cause blurred vision, eye pain, or even temporary vision loss. Double vision or involuntary eye movements may also occur.

**Numbness or tingling:** Sensations of numbness, tingling, or pins and needles in the face, body, or extremities are common early symptoms of MS.

**Muscle weakness or stiffness:** Weakness in the arms or legs, difficulty walking, or problems with coordination and balance can be early signs of MS.

**Electric shock sensations:** Some individuals may experience brief, intense sensations resembling electric shocks with certain neck movements, known as Lhermitte's sign.

**Bowel or bladder dysfunction:** MS can cause problems with bladder control, leading to urinary urgency, frequency, or retention. Bowel dysfunction, such as constipation or incontinence, may also occur.

**Cognitive changes:** Memory problems, difficulty concentrating, and other cognitive changes can occur in some individuals with MS.

It's important to note that these symptoms can be caused by various conditions other than MS, so experiencing one or more of these symptoms does not necessarily mean you have MS. However, if you experience any unusual or concerning symptoms, especially if they persist or worsen over time, it's essential to consult with a healthcare professional for proper evaluation and diagnosis. Early diagnosis and treatment can help manage the symptoms of MS and potentially slow the progression of the disease.





# Diagnosis of MS



There are no specific tests for MS. Instead, a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis often relies on ruling out other conditions that might produce similar signs and symptoms, known as a differential diagnosis.

Your doctor is likely to start with a thorough medical history and examination.

## Your doctor may then recommend:

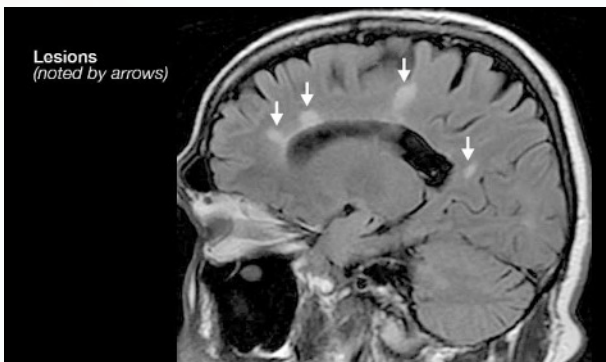
- Blood tests, to help rule out other diseases with symptoms like MS. Tests to check for specific biomarkers associated with MS are currently under development and may also aid in diagnosing the disease.
- Spinal tap (lumbar puncture), in which a small sample of cerebrospinal fluid is removed from your spinal canal for laboratory analysis. This sample can show abnormalities in antibodies that are associated with MS. A spinal tap can also help rule out infections and other conditions with symptoms like MS. A new antibody test (for kappa free light chains) may be faster and less expensive than previous spinal fluid tests for multiple sclerosis.



▪ MRI, which can reveal areas of MS (lesions) on your brain, cervical and thoracic spinal cord. You may receive an intravenous injection of a contrast material to highlight lesions that indicate your disease is in an active phase.

▪ Evoked potential tests that record the electrical signals produced by your nervous system in response to stimuli may be done. An evoked potential test may use visual stimuli or electrical stimuli. In these tests, you watch a moving visual pattern, as short electrical impulses are applied to nerves in your legs or arms. Electrodes measure how quickly the information travels down your nerve pathways.

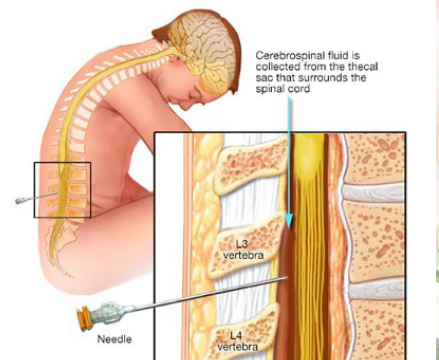
***"Blood tests, to help rule out other diseases with symptoms like MS."***



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In most people with relapsing-remitting MS, the diagnosis is straightforward and based on a pattern of symptoms consistent with the disease and confirmed by brain imaging scans, such as an MRI.

Diagnosing MS can be more difficult in people with unusual symptoms or progressive disease. In these cases, further testing with spinal fluid analysis, evoked potentials and additional imaging may be needed.





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## Can MS be Cured?

As of my last update in January 2022, there is currently no cure for multiple sclerosis (MS). However, there are treatments available to help manage symptoms, slow the progression of the disease, and improve quality of life for individuals with MS.

Treatment options for MS typically include medications to reduce inflammation and immune system activity, manage symptoms such as fatigue and muscle stiffness, and to potentially slow the progression of the disease. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and other rehabilitation strategies can also be beneficial in managing symptoms and improving function.

Researchers continue to explore potential new treatments and approaches for MS, including novel medications, stem cell therapies, and immunomodulatory treatments. While there have been significant advancements in understanding and treating MS, a definitive cure has not yet been developed. However, ongoing research offers hope for improved treatments and outcomes for individuals living with MS in the future.

## Is MS a Congenital or Hereditary Condition?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is not typically considered a congenital or hereditary condition that a person is born with. Instead, MS is thought to develop later in life, usually between the ages of 20 and 40, although it can occur at any age.

The exact cause of MS is not fully understood, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic, environmental, and immunological factors. Certain genetic variations may increase susceptibility to MS, but they do not necessarily cause the disease on their own. Environmental factors such as viral infections, vitamin D deficiency, smoking, and other triggers may also play a role in the development of MS. MS is an autoimmune disease in which the body's immune system mistakenly attacks the central nervous system (CNS), specifically targeting the myelin sheath, the protective covering of nerve fibers in the brain and spinal cord. This immune system dysfunction leads to inflammation, damage, and scarring (sclerosis) of the myelin, disrupting nerve signaling and causing the characteristic symptoms of MS.

While MS is not present at birth, individuals may have a genetic predisposition to the disease that increases their risk of developing MS later in life. Additionally, environmental factors and other triggers may influence the onset and progression of MS in susceptible individuals.

## Is MS Contagious?

No, multiple sclerosis (MS) is not contagious. MS is an autoimmune disease in which the body's immune system mistakenly attacks the central nervous system (CNS), specifically targeting the myelin sheath that covers nerve fibers. It is not caused by bacteria, viruses, or other infectious agents, and it cannot be transmitted from person to person through casual contact, such as touching, kissing, or sharing utensils.

While the exact cause of MS is not fully understood, it is believed to involve a combination of genetic, environmental, and immunological factors. Factors such as genetics, viral infections, vitamin D deficiency, and other environmental triggers may contribute to the development of MS, but the disease itself is not contagious in the traditional sense.

It's important for people to understand that individuals with MS do not pose a risk of spreading the disease to others, and they should be treated with compassion and support rather than fear or stigma.

## Is MS Fatal?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) itself is not typically considered a fatal disease in the sense that it directly causes death. However, complications related to MS can sometimes lead to severe disability and, in rare cases, can be life-threatening.

### Complications of MS may include:

**Respiratory problems:** Severe weakness or paralysis of respiratory muscles can occur in advanced stages of MS, leading to respiratory complications such as pneumonia.

**Infections:** Individuals with MS may have a higher risk of infections due to immune system dysfunction or immobility.

**Falls and injuries:** Balance and coordination problems associated with MS can increase the risk of falls and related injuries.

**Secondary conditions:** MS may increase the risk of developing other medical conditions such as depression, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease, which can impact overall health and longevity.

While MS itself is not typically fatal, it can significantly affect quality of life and life expectancy, particularly in cases of advanced disability or severe complications. However, with proper management and treatment, many individuals with MS are able to lead fulfilling lives and manage their symptoms effectively. Early diagnosis, appropriate medical care, and lifestyle modifications can help minimize the impact of MS and improve long-term outcomes.



# Can You Live a Normal Life with Multiple Sclerosis?

Living a "normal" life with multiple sclerosis (MS) can vary greatly from person to person, as the disease affects individuals differently and can fluctuate in severity over time. However, many people with MS are able to lead fulfilling lives and engage in various activities, despite the challenges posed by the condition.



**With proper management and support, it is possible for individuals with MS to:**

**Manage symptoms:** Effective management of MS symptoms, such as fatigue, mobility issues, pain, and cognitive changes, can significantly improve quality of life. This may involve medication, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and other treatments tailored to individual needs.

**Maintain independence:** Many individuals with MS are able to maintain a level of independence with the help of assistive devices, mobility aids, and adaptive techniques to overcome physical limitations. **Stay active:** Regular exercise and physical activity can help manage symptoms, improve strength and flexibility, boost mood, and enhance overall well-being. Exercise programs should be tailored to individual abilities and preferences.

**Pursue work and hobbies:** With accommodations and adjustments, many people with MS are able to continue working, pursue education, and engage in hobbies and recreational activities they enjoy. Flexibility in work arrangements, such as part-time schedules or telecommuting, may be necessary for some individuals.

**Nurture relationships:** Maintaining social connections and supportive relationships with family, friends, and peers can be beneficial for emotional well-being and coping with the challenges of MS. Open communication and education about MS can help others understand and provide support.

**Manage emotional well-being:** Coping with a chronic illness like MS can be emotionally challenging. Seeking support from mental health professionals, participating in support groups, practicing relaxation techniques, and engaging in activities that bring joy and fulfillment can help manage stress, anxiety, and depression.

While living with MS may require adjustments and accommodations, it is possible to lead a meaningful and fulfilling life with the condition. Each person's journey with MS is unique, and it's important to work closely with healthcare professionals to develop a personalized management plan that addresses individual needs and goals.





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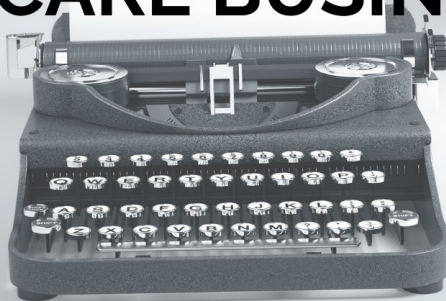
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# Common Issues or Challenges of Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple sclerosis (MS) can present a wide range of symptoms and challenges that vary from person to person and can fluctuate over time. Some common issues or challenges associated with MS include:

**Fatigue:** Overwhelming fatigue is one of the most common symptoms of MS, affecting up to 80% of individuals with the condition. Fatigue can significantly impact daily activities and quality of life.

**Mobility problems:** MS can cause muscle weakness, stiffness, spasticity, and balance problems, making it difficult to walk or perform daily tasks.

**Sensory symptoms:** Numbness, tingling, or other abnormal sensations in the face, body, or extremities are common symptoms of MS.

**Vision problems:** Optic neuritis, inflammation of the optic nerve, can cause blurred vision, eye pain, or temporary vision loss. Double vision or involuntary eye movements may also occur.

**Bowel and bladder dysfunction:** MS can affect the nerves that control bowel and bladder function, leading to symptoms such as constipation, diarrhea, urinary urgency, frequency, or retention.

**Cognitive changes:** Many individuals with MS experience cognitive impairment, including problems with memory, concentration, attention, and information processing.

**Emotional changes:** MS can impact mood and emotional well-being, leading to symptoms such as depression, anxiety, irritability, or mood swings.

**Pain:** MS-related pain can manifest as neuropathic pain (burning, tingling, or shooting pain), musculoskeletal pain, or headaches.



**Heat sensitivity:** Many individuals with MS are sensitive to heat, which can exacerbate symptoms such as fatigue, weakness, and vision problems.

**Sexual dysfunction:** MS can affect sexual function, leading to issues such as decreased libido, erectile dysfunction, or difficulties with arousal and orgasm.

**Difficulty with speech and swallowing:** MS-related weakness or coordination problems can affect speech and swallowing, leading to difficulties in communication and eating.

**Social and employment challenges:** MS can impact social relationships, employment, and financial stability, leading to feelings of isolation, frustration, and stress.

Managing MS effectively often requires a multidisciplinary approach involving healthcare professionals such as neurologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists, and social workers. Treatment strategies may include medications to manage symptoms and disease progression, rehabilitation therapies to improve function and independence, and lifestyle modifications to optimize overall health and well-being.

***"MS can impact mood and emotional well-being, leading to symptoms such as depression, anxiety, irritability, or mood swings."***

# Does MS Change your Body Shape?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) primarily affects the central nervous system (CNS), including the brain and spinal cord, rather than directly causing changes in body shape. However, MS can lead to various symptoms and complications that may indirectly affect body shape in some individuals. These effects can vary depending on factors such as disease severity, mobility limitations, and overall health status.



Here are some ways in which MS-related symptoms and complications may indirectly impact body shape: dination or motor skills:

**Mobility issues:** MS can cause muscle weakness, stiffness, spasticity, and balance problems, which may affect mobility and physical activity levels. Reduced mobility and physical activity can lead to muscle atrophy (muscle wasting) or changes in muscle tone, particularly in the legs and other affected areas. In some cases, this may result in changes in posture or gait, although it may not necessarily lead to significant alterations in overall body shape.

**Fatigue:** Fatigue is a common symptom of MS that can impact energy levels and activity levels throughout the day. Persistent fatigue may affect a person's ability to engage in regular exercise or physical activity, potentially contributing to changes in body composition or weight over time.

**Medication side effects:** Some medications used to manage MS symptoms or disease progression may have side effects that affect body weight, appetite, or metabolism. For example, corticosteroids, which are sometimes used to treat MS relapses, can cause fluid retention and weight gain in some individuals.

**Secondary health conditions:** MS may increase the risk of developing certain secondary health conditions, such as osteoporosis or urinary tract infections, which may indirectly impact body shape or overall health.

It's important to note that the impact of MS on body shape can vary widely among individuals, and not everyone with MS will experience significant changes in body composition or appearance. Additionally, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and proper medical management of MS symptoms, can help minimize the impact of the disease on overall health and well-being.



Cleveland Clinic

LOU RUVO CENTER FOR BRAIN HEALTH

## Unveiling Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care:

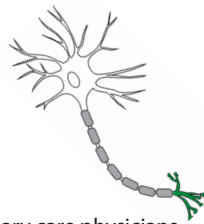
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### TARGET AUDIENCE

This activity is intended for neurologists, primary care physicians, psychologists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, and other allied health professionals who care for persons with multiple sclerosis.

**Register today at [ccfme.org/MSLV](https://ccfme.org/MSLV)**

- Accurately diagnose multiple sclerosis (MS) and distinguish it from other demyelinating disorders and non-specific white matter disease ...
- Identify appropriate disease-modifying therapies for patients with MS, considering individual patient profiles, risk factors, and treatment goals.
- Evaluate the importance of neurorehabilitation in improving functional outcomes and quality of life for patients with MS.
- Determine the psychological impact of MS on patients' mental health ...
- Describe the unique needs of special populations in MS care ...

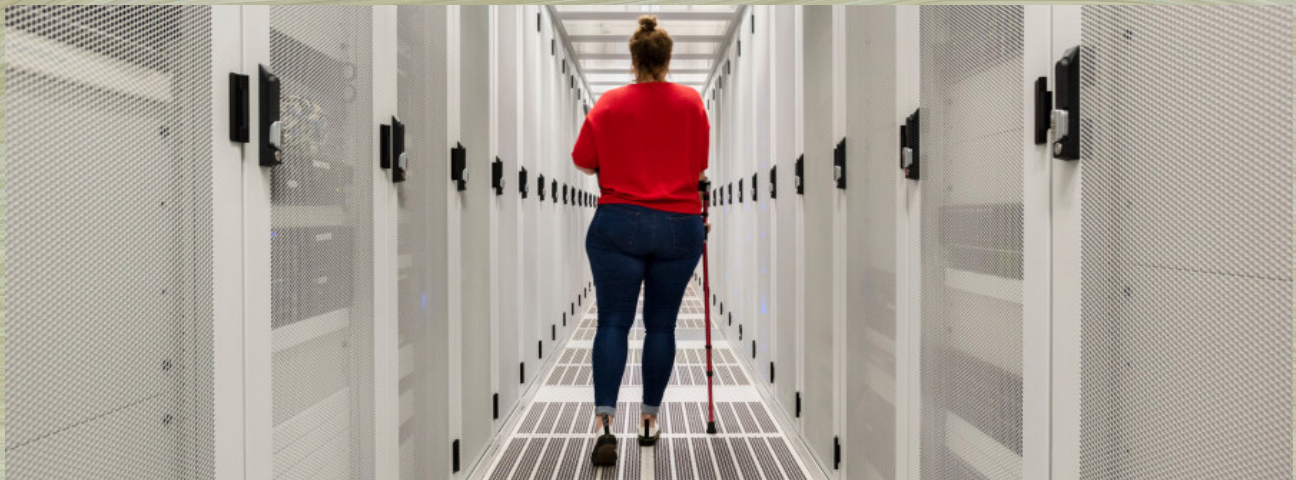


# What are the Stages of MS?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a complex disease with variable progression, and it does not have clearly defined stages in the same way as some other chronic conditions. Instead, MS is often described in terms of different disease courses or patterns of progression. The most common disease courses of MS include:

**Relapsing-remitting MS (RRMS):** This is the most common form of MS, characterized by periods of relapses or flare-ups (exacerbations) of symptoms followed by periods of partial or complete recovery (remissions). Between relapses, there may be no apparent disease activity, although some individuals may experience residual symptoms or disease progression over time.

**Primary progressive MS (PPMS):** This form of MS is characterized by a gradual worsening of neurological function from the onset of symptoms, without distinct relapses or remissions. Primary progressive MS tends to progress more steadily than relapsing-remitting MS and may lead to greater disability over time.



**Secondary progressive MS (SPMS):** In some individuals with relapsing-remitting MS, the disease may eventually transition to a secondary progressive course. In secondary progressive MS, there is a gradual worsening of neurological function over time, with or without occasional relapses and remissions.

**Progressive-relapsing MS (PRMS):** Progressive-relapsing MS is characterized by a steady worsening of neurological function from the onset of symptoms, with occasional superimposed relapses or flare-ups. In addition to these disease courses, MS can also be classified based on disease activity and disease progression as active or inactive and mild, moderate, or severe, respectively.

*"In secondary progressive MS, there is a gradual worsening of neurological function over time, with or without occasional relapses and remissions."*

It's important to note that the progression and severity of MS can vary widely among individuals, and not everyone will experience the same disease course or pattern of progression. Some individuals may have periods of stability or even improvement in symptoms, while others may experience more rapid disease progression and greater disability over time. Treatment decisions and management strategies for MS are often tailored to individual needs and disease characteristics. Regular monitoring and evaluation by healthcare professionals are essential for optimizing care and addressing evolving needs over time.



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# MS Challenges During Pregnancy



*Multiple sclerosis (MS) can present unique challenges during pregnancy, both in terms of managing the condition and potential effects on pregnancy and childbirth. Here are some considerations:*

**Disease Management:** During pregnancy, many women with MS experience a decrease in relapse rates, especially during the second and third trimesters. However, there can be an increased risk of relapse in the first few months after delivery. It's essential to work closely with your healthcare team to monitor your condition and adjust your treatment plan as needed during pregnancy.

**Medications:** Some medications used to treat MS may not be safe to use during pregnancy or breastfeeding. If you're planning to become pregnant or are pregnant, discuss your treatment options with your neurologist and obstetrician. They can help you weigh the potential risks and benefits of continuing, modifying, or discontinuing medication during pregnancy.

**Prenatal Care:** It's crucial to receive regular prenatal care throughout your pregnancy to monitor both your health and the health of your baby. Your obstetrician can help ensure that your pregnancy progresses smoothly and address any concerns that may arise.

**Labor and Delivery:** While many women with MS are able to have normal vaginal deliveries, some may require additional support or interventions during labor and delivery. Discuss your birth plan and any concerns you have with your healthcare team well in advance of your due date.

**Postpartum Care:** After delivery, you may experience changes in your MS symptoms or an increased risk of relapse. It's essential to continue working closely with your healthcare team during the postpartum period to manage your condition effectively.

Overall, with proper medical care and support, many women with MS are able to have successful pregnancies and healthy babies. Open communication with your healthcare providers and careful management of your MS symptoms are key to a safe and healthy pregnancy.



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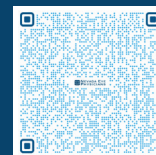


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**Dave Austin**

National Cost Recovery Services, LLC

Email: [Dave@ncrs.co](mailto:Dave@ncrs.co)

Phone: (M) 702.496.529



# Nevada's Inaugural MS Awareness Week Spotlights the Critical Importance of Early Diagnoses, Access to Care and Resources

Dr. Carrie M. Hersh, Director of Multiple Sclerosis Health and Wellness Program, Associate Program Director of Neuroimmunology and Multiple Sclerosis Fellowship at Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health



Monday, March 18 through Friday, March 22 kicks off Nevada's first-ever Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. While the month of March is deemed National MS Awareness Month, the third week of March is now special to Nevada.

Made possible by the "David Humm Bill," signed into law by Governor Lombardo in July 2023, this legislation requires the Department of Health and Human Services to include important multiple sclerosis-related information and resources to their website. David Humm, known as "The Original Las Vegas Raider" died from complications of MS in 2018. Now, his legacy is helping expand resources, awareness and access to MS care in Nevada.

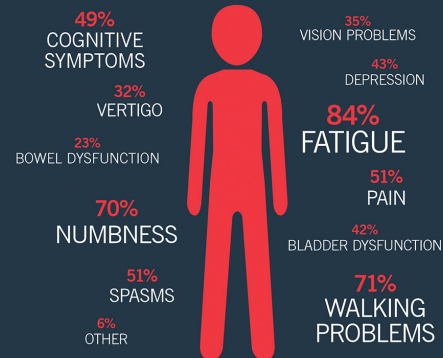
An estimated 9,000 Nevadans are living with multiple sclerosis, a complex autoimmune disease that causes overactive immune cells to mistakenly attack healthy nerve cells. MS is a hard disease to diagnose because it affects everyone differently, making awareness for its varied signs and symptoms vitally important for early intervention.

Through the inaugural Nevada-specific legislation and Nevada MS Awareness Week, Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health aims to shine a local spotlight on the importance of early accurate diagnosis and resources available to the community.

Lack of awareness is a key barrier in seeking care, as earlier diagnosis and treatment can lead to increased quality of life and improved disease outcomes. Research shows even a five-year delay from diagnosis to treatment has a significant effect on well-being and improved quality of life.



## MOST FREQUENT MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SYMPTOMS



(© 2023 CLEVELAND CLINIC)

[clevelandclinic.org/NevadaMS](https://clevelandclinic.org/NevadaMS)





This is Katie Baird and Elizabeth Jeser, and we are Co-Presidents of the Clark County Medical Society Alliance (CCMSA). The mission of CCMSA when it was founded 75 years ago continues today - to build a healthier Southern Nevada. CCMSA is a non-profit service organization comprised of spouses of members of the Clark County Medical Society and the American Medical Association. Primarily a service organization, CCMSA focuses on health-related needs in the community, initiating their own projects or providing volunteer hours and monetary assistance to charitable organizations or groups.



This year, our charity of choice is the Trauma Intervention Program (TIP) of Southern Nevada, Inc. TIP works with all of our local hospitals, EMS, law enforcement agencies, the coroner's office, and other organizations to provide well trained citizen volunteers to scenes of crisis/tragedy who can offer emotional and practical support to everyone on scene. Studies show that having a well trained person intercede in the immediate aftermath of traumatic situations decreases the long-term effects of the trauma. In addition to helping the victims on scene, TIP volunteers are a valuable resource to the agencies that call them out, because they allow the emergency responders and law enforcement officers to do their work uninterrupted. In scenes of trauma and tragedy, the emergency responders and law enforcement officers have to prioritize their time so they can get to the next scene. TIP allows them to do their work more efficiently, while helping those who have just experienced trauma, while using care and expertise. We wanted to spend our year highlighting their mission and bringing awareness, because due to the nature of the work they do, most people are unaware of who they are and the incredible support they are ready to extend to each of us in our darkest moments.

We are celebrating our 75th anniversary and our 22nd charity Fashion Show event on April 18, 2024 at the Four Seasons. We would like to personally invite you to join us as we raise awareness and support the Trauma Intervention Program!



*75th Anniversary and  
22nd Fashion Show Event*

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# MS Treatment Options

The treatment options for multiple sclerosis (MS) depend on various factors including the type of MS, the severity of symptoms, and individual preferences. Here are some common treatment options:

**Disease-modifying therapies (DMTs):** These medications are designed to modify the immune system's response and reduce the frequency and severity of MS relapses. There are several different types of DMTs available, including injectable medications, oral medications, and infusion therapies. Your healthcare provider will help determine which DMT is most appropriate based on factors such as disease activity, potential side effects, and your overall health.

**Symptom management:** Many symptoms of MS can be managed with medications and other therapies. For example, medications may be prescribed to help alleviate symptoms such as fatigue, muscle stiffness or spasticity, bladder or bowel dysfunction, pain, and depression or anxiety. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy may also be beneficial for managing symptoms and improving function.

**Rehabilitation therapies:** Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy can help individuals with MS improve mobility, coordination, strength, and speech. These therapies focus on maximizing function and independence, and may include exercises, adaptive equipment, and strategies for managing daily activities.

**Lifestyle modifications:** Making healthy lifestyle choices can help manage symptoms and improve overall well-being for individuals with MS. This may include regular exercise, a balanced diet, stress management techniques, and getting adequate rest and sleep.

**Supportive therapies:** Additional therapies such as acupuncture, massage therapy, yoga, and mindfulness-based practices may provide symptom relief and improve quality of life for some individuals with MS. It's important to discuss any complementary or alternative therapies with your healthcare provider to ensure they are safe and appropriate for you.

**Monitoring and regular follow-up:** MS is a chronic condition that requires ongoing monitoring and management. Your healthcare provider will likely recommend regular check-ups and monitoring of disease activity through clinical exams, imaging tests, and other assessments. This allows for early detection of changes in disease activity and adjustment of treatment as needed.

It's important to work closely with your healthcare provider to develop a comprehensive treatment plan that addresses your individual needs and goals. They can help you navigate the available treatment options and make informed decisions about your care.



***"Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy can help individuals with MS improve mobility, coordination, strength, and speech."***







Jamie Ross – *Pact Coalition* | Jessica Johnson – *SNHD*  
 Victoria Hughes – *SNHD* | Diego Trujillo- *CEO, Las Vegas HEALS*  
 Dr. Kelly Morgan | Ericka Paez | Dre Cantwell-Frank – *Bridge*



## Las Vegas HEALS SNV ED Opiate Response Panel & Mixer February 28, 2024 At City of Las Vegas Innovation Center







Dave Austin - NCRS  
Kjerstine Willis



David Hart - Sunrise GME Emergency  
Medicine Residency



Dr. Tawni Christensen - Westcoast Wound  
and Skin Care



Chrissy Ethiridge - The Neighborhood Clinic



Terri Bruesehoff - NurseCore



Mia Rios - CHC NV



## Las Vegas HEALS SNV ED Opiate Response Panel & Mixer February 28, 2024 At City of Las Vegas Innovation Center



Lori & Doug Roorda - WRMCN Medical  
Volunteer



Carlynn Mazon - The Villa Group



Adriana Romero - Las Vegas HEALS



Stephanie Zority - HCA Southern Hills



Minjung Lombardi - G-Bank



Rebecca Edgeworth





Isabeau Harrison



Karina Silva - *The Villa Group*



Kolton Villa - *The Villa Group*



Troy Hadley - *Eleven Lending*



Victoria Hughes - *SNHD*  
Jessica Johnson - *SNHD*



## Las Vegas HEALS SNV ED Opiate Response Panel & Mixer February 28, 2024 At City of Las Vegas Innovation Center



Adriana Romero - *Las Vegas HEALS*  
Troy Hadley - *Eleven Lending*  
Kristina Lereu - *The Villa Group*  
Kolton Villa - *The Villa Group*



Michelle Zang - *HealthPlan of Nevada*  
Laurielyn Loa - *United Healthgroup*



Stephanie Galerkin - *Galerkin M.D.*



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 7, 2024

**March 10 is National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

*Public invited to March 11 observance at The Center*

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) is commemorating National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, Sunday, March 10, a day to support women and girls who are living with HIV while encouraging others to be tested for HIV. Locally, an observance of the day, in collaboration with the Southern Nevada Health Consortium, is scheduled for Monday, March 11, from 1 - 4:30 p.m. at The Center, 401 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89101. During "It's Tea Time," attendees can access information and resources about women and HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). In addition, there will be discussions about the following topics:

- Women and PrEP.
- Sex, Pleasure, and Hygiene.
- Personal experiences of living with HIV and being on PrEP.

In Clark County, 77 women and girls had new HIV diagnoses in 2022, compared to 57 in 2021. This reflects a rate of 6.5 new diagnoses per 100,000 in 2022, which was a slight increase from the rate of 4.8 new diagnoses per 100,000 in 2021. On a national level, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that women accounted for 19 percent (6,999) of the 36,801 new HIV diagnoses in the United States in 2019. Women ages 25 to 34 had the highest number of new HIV diagnoses, and Black/African American women continued to be disproportionately impacted by HIV.

HIV testing gives women and girls an opportunity to learn their status so they can take steps to protect their health and help prevent infection in others. Routine testing is recommended for women who are at a high risk of infection. Free HIV testing is available in the Arlene Cooper Clinic at The Center, Monday through Thursday from 1 – 6 p.m. and on Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Appointments are preferred, but walk-ins are accepted.

Additionally, Express HIV Testing is available Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Sexual Health Clinic, 280 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Appointments are not required, but

clients must be asymptomatic. Additional testing can be done for syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. Visit the Sexual Health Clinic page on the SNHD website for more information.

SNHD also offers free, at-home HIV tests through its Collect2Protect program. At-home tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea are available for a fee. The kits are available on SNHD'S Collect2Protect page and provide a convenient and private testing option.

Early diagnosis is critical for people with HIV so that they can benefit from antiretroviral therapy (ART). ART reduces HIV levels in the bloodstream, reduces HIV-related illnesses, and lowers the risk of transmitting HIV to intimate partners. With ART, HIV-positive people can remain healthy for many years. According to the CDC, only 10 percent of women who could benefit from PrEP were prescribed the medication in 2019. PrEP is a medication that can be provided to people who do not have HIV but are at a high risk of infection. When taken as prescribed, PrEP is highly effective for preventing HIV. For more information about women and PrEP, visit the CDC's Let's Stop HIV Together web page. For additional information about National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, visit the CDC's website at National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day | Awareness Days | Resource Library | HIV/AIDS | CDC.

The Southern Nevada Health District serves as the local public health authority for Clark County, Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, Mesquite and North Las Vegas. The agency safeguards the public health of the community's residents and visitors through innovative programs, regulations, and initiatives focused on protecting and promoting their health and well-being. More information about the Health District, its programs, services, and the regulatory oversight it provides is available at [www.SNHD.info](http://www.SNHD.info). Follow the Health District on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



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TherapyCon  
Resorts World

**Mar 8-10**  
Internal Medicine for Primary  
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**Mar 12-14**  
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