



**National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society**

## **Frequently Asked Questions National MS Society**

### **What is multiple sclerosis?**

Multiple sclerosis is a neurological disease that interrupts the flow of information from the brain to the body and stops people from moving. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are moving us closer to a world free of MS.

### **Who gets MS?**

Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50. Anyone may develop MS but there are some patterns. Twice as many women as men have MS. Studies indicate that genetic factors make certain individuals more susceptible than others, but there is no evidence that MS is directly inherited. Approximately 400,000 Americans acknowledge having MS, and every week about 200 people are diagnosed with the disease...more than one person each hour. Worldwide, MS may affect 2.5 million individuals.

### **Is there a cure?**

There is no known cause of or cure for MS. Significant advances are being made in both understanding and treating the disease. There are currently six FDA-approved disease-modifying drugs available to treat the major forms of MS. These drugs reduce the severity of exacerbations and appear to slow the progression of the disease. Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. Now, more than ever, there is hope for a cure.

### **What is the National Multiple Sclerosis Society?**

MS stops people from moving. We exist to make sure it doesn't. The National MS Society was founded in 1946, and today the Society has a 50-state network of chapters. The National MS Society supports more MS research, offers more services for people with MS, provides more professional education programs and furthers more MS advocacy efforts than any other MS organization in the world.

### **How does the National MS Society fund research?**

Scientists don't fully understand the causes of MS, so more research is desperately needed. We need to support MS research in order to develop better treatments and potentially even a cure. In 2008, the National MS Society will invest \$49 million into MS research projects in the U.S. and abroad, supporting more than 440 new and ongoing research projects. Between its inception in 1946 and the end of fiscal year 2008, the Society will have invested a cumulative \$600 million in research.

### **What can I do to help?**

Everyone can help to bring us closer to a cure. For more information about getting involved with the National MS Society, please call **1 800 FIGHT MS**, or visit **[www.nationalmssociety.org](http://www.nationalmssociety.org)**.