We don’t know exactly why, but we do know that a person with MS may have lots of energy at certain times of the day, but feel very tired at other times. We know that some people with MS have days or weeks or months when they feel better, and then days or weeks or months when they feel worse.

**This can be confusing and frustrating for everyone!**

Sometimes when a person is sick with a cold or fever, his or her MS symptoms get worse for a while. When the cold goes away, the symptoms may get better. MS may feel worse when the weather is very hot and then feel better when the weather becomes cool and dry. And sometimes MS just changes! This is why we say MS is unpredictable.

**Unpredictable means we don’t always know what to expect.**

The best way to deal with something that is unpredictable is by being prepared to change your plans if you have to. So, if your family has planned a day at the zoo, but then your mom or dad doesn’t feel up to it, try to change your plans to something less strenuous. For example, you could decide to stay home and watch a movie together or have a picnic in the backyard. That’s called being flexible.

It’s an important thing to be when you have MS in your house!
WHEN A PERSON HAS MS the covering (myelin) that protects the nerves gets damaged. Scars form where the myelin is damaged. As messages travel from the brain, they sometimes get stuck or slowed down by these scars. When this happens, the other parts of the body can’t always do what the brain is telling them to do.

SOMETIMES people with MS have trouble seeing. Sometimes their arms and legs feel weak or their skin feels “tingly” (like pins and needles). Sometimes they lose their balance, feel very tired, or have trouble walking. MS problems like these are called symptoms.

SYMPTOMS of MS can come and go. We don’t know exactly why. Sometimes you don’t even notice the symptoms. At other times they are pretty obvious. It’s hard for a person with MS to know from one day to the next how he or she will feel. That is why we say that MS is unpredictable.

INTERESTING FACT:
Multiple means MANY.
Sclerosis means SCARS.
So, multiple sclerosis means "MANY SCARS."

KEEP MYELIN
WE WANT YOU!
we love to publish your pictures, stories, and poems about MS.

PLEASE SEND US YOUR WORK:
Tell us how your family learns about MS together, how you feel about having MS in your family, what advice you would give other kids about having a mom or dad with MS, how you help your mom or dad, or whom you talk with about MS.
Q:
My dad says that going to the beach isn’t fun for him anymore. When he gets hot, his MS feels a lot worse. He has trouble walking and his vision gets blurry. Why does that happen? How can I help him feel better?

A:
Many people with MS feel worse when their body gets overheated. When the body’s temperature goes up—even a tiny bit—the messages that travel from the brain to the rest of the body can’t travel as fast. This makes a person’s symptoms act up until his or her body cools down again. Hot weather, exercise, or a fever can all cause someone to feel uncomfortable for awhile. This is called a pseudoexacerbation (soo-doe-egg-zass-er-bay-shun) — try saying that three times fast!). The good thing is that people begin to feel better as soon as their body temperature returns to normal. You can help your dad by helping him stay cool. He should stay out of the bright sun, drink lots of cold drinks, and maybe even wear a cooling collar or vest to help his body stay cool.
My mommy has MS and I don’t like it.
I wish that they can find a cure because I want my mommy to be happy and play with me.
I hope and hope they find a cure for my mom.
My mommy takes shots all the time, but she still lets me sit in her lap.

Madison

My dad has MS. He lives just fine.
Sometimes it gets rough to survive.
But hey, he’s still around.
He might worry me from time to time.
I wonder what to do.
Mom’s always there to calm me down.
He loves us both very much.
And we love him very much back.

I talk to my best friends and they understand they help me out a lot from time to time.
They are very trustful.

MS, I wish would leave for good and never return to my upside down world.
Ben: “Gee, it’s really hot today. I hope my mom is OK. I’ve heard that heat can make MS worse for a while.”

Crystal: Hey Ben, you should tell her about it.... And get one for me too!!!

Michael: “Maybe your mom could wear a ‘cooling vest.’ It’s a neat vest with lots of pockets that hold those frozen ice packs—the kind that keep your lunch cool. It keeps your whole body cool!”
1. The covering around the nerves is called __________________________

2. The physical problems caused by MS are called __________________________

3. MS can change from one day to the next - that's why we say it's __________________________

4. MS affects the brain and spinal cord, which together make up the __________________________

5. Many of the messages going from the brain to other parts of the body travel along the __________________________

6. The brain acts like a __________________________

7. The words multiple sclerosis mean __________________________

Pick out your answers from the words below:

- Symptoms
- Computer
- Spinal cord
- Unpredictable
- Myelin
- Central nervous system
- Many scars

CROSSWORD!!!
ISSUE #20
KEEP S'MYLEIN
MS IS UNPREDICTABLE

Families can count on the National MS Society!
To learn more about the resources available to you and your family, please contact an MS Navigator at: 1-800-344-4867

JOKES!

David’s father has three sons: Snap, Crackle and ___?

ANSWER: David

What kind of car does Mickey Mouse’s wife drive?

ANSWER: A Minnie Van!

Which is faster: heat or cold?

Heat because you can catch cold!

We want your feedback; see Parents’ Section to see how you can participate.