

How we help:

The Multiple System Atrophy Trust is the UK and the Republic of Ireland's leading charity supporting people affected by multiple system atrophy (MSA).

We work to support people affected by MSA, their carers, family and friends throughout their journey. We do this by providing:

- A MSA Health Care Specialist telephone and email support service.
- Support with obtaining benefits, entitlements, care needs assessments and related issues.
- Information, guides, webinars and factsheets about living with MSA.
- A network of digital and local Support Groups located around the UK and Eire and the peer led online forum [HealthUnlocked.com/msa-trust](https://www.healthunlocked.com/msa-trust).
- Accurate up-to-date information through 'MSA News', our regular magazine and through our website.
- Education and support for health and care professionals working with people with MSA.

We are committed to promoting and supporting research into MSA to increase understanding, find the cause and, ultimately, its cure.

The MSA Trust is funded entirely by voluntary donations and all our services to people affected by MSA are offered free of charge.



Multiple System Atrophy Trust

Information, support, education and research

To join the Trust please visit our website, telephone, or e-mail us:



Multiple System Atrophy Trust

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Scan to join now

www.msatrust.org.uk

0333 323 4591 | support@msatrust.org.uk

HealthUnlocked

[healthunlocked.com/msa-trust](https://www.healthunlocked.com/msa-trust)

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An Introduction to Multiple System Atrophy (MSA)

Multiple System Atrophy Trust

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What is MSA?



Multiple system atrophy (MSA) is a progressive neurological disease that causes nerve cells to shrink in different areas of the brain. This leads to problems with movement, speech, balance and autonomic body functions such as bladder and blood pressure control.

- It affects around 4.5 people per 100,000, meaning around 3,300 people are living with it in the UK and Eire.
- It affects adult men and women and usually starts between 40 - 60 years of age.

What are the symptoms of MSA?



MSA affects three different regions of the brain and this is why each person with MSA has individual symptoms.

Damage to the area affecting movement (Parkinsonism) may lead to:

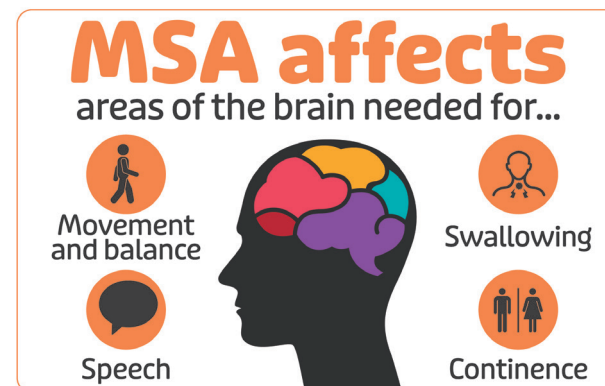
- loss of balance and lack of coordination
- feeling slow and stiff when moving
- noticeable changes to handwriting.

Damage to the area for coordination and balance can lead to symptoms including:

- feeling clumsy or dropping things
- feeling unsteady in crowds
- inability to balance without support
- slurred speech.

Damage to the area controlling bodily functions which occurs without us being aware (autonomic), leading to symptoms that include:

- various bladder issues which may change over time
- sexual dysfunction
- feeling dizzy or fainting because of blood pressure problems
- pain around the neck and shoulders.



How is MSA Diagnosed?



Diagnosis of MSA is a clinical one and depends on a neurologist recognising a combination of symptoms and signs.

In its early stages it is extremely difficult to diagnose as the symptoms listed above are common to other neurological diseases such as Parkinson's disease and Cerebellar Ataxia.

It is quite normal to be diagnosed with another disease before being diagnosed with MSA. This reflects the progress of the condition and not the skill of the specialist.

Treatment of MSA



Unfortunately, there is currently no cure for MSA.

It's complex nature means that the best treatment is likely to include a combination of medication, specialised equipment and various therapies to manage individual symptoms.