

# People with multiple sclerosis may have double the risk of dying early

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Demyelination by MS. The CD68 colored tissue shows several macrophages in the area of the lesion. Original scale 1:100. Credit: [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) Marvin 101/Wikipedia

New research suggests people with multiple sclerosis (MS) may have double the risk of dying early compared to people without MS, with those younger than 59 at a three times higher risk. The study is published

in the May 27, 2015, online issue of *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

"Despite studies that show MS survival may be improving over time, the more than 2.5 million people affected worldwide by this disabling disease still face a risk of dying earlier, specifically those who are diagnosed younger," said study author Ruth Ann Marrie, MD, PhD, of the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, and a member of the American Academy of Neurology.

For the study, researchers reviewed the health system use of 5,797 people diagnosed with MS and 28,807 [healthy people](#) of the same sex, born in the same year and from the same areas of the province.

People with MS lived a median of 76 years, compared to 83 years for people who did not have the disease.

A total of 44 percent of the people with MS were reported to have died from MS and related complications of the disease. After that, the most common causes of death were circulatory system disease, cancer and respiratory disease.

The researchers also looked at whether participants had several other [conditions](#), such as diabetes, depression and epilepsy. Overall, they found that having other conditions did not shorten the lifespan of people with MS any more than it did for the people without MS. However, people with MS who had other conditions had a shorter life span than those who did not have conditions such as diabetes.

"Treating other conditions better may be a way of improving survival," said Marrie.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

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