

Contributors to delay of multiple sclerosis diagnosis ID'd

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(HealthDay)—First symptoms and disease type are contributors to delays

in multiple sclerosis (MS) diagnosis, according to a study recently published in the *Multiple Sclerosis Journal*.

Laura Barin, from the University of Zurich, and colleagues examined data from the Swiss MS Registry to identify possible causes of [delay](#) in the diagnostic process for 522 patients. The time from first contact to the first consultation and evaluation-to-[diagnosis](#) time were modeled.

The researchers found that [general practitioners](#) were mostly contacted first (67 percent), which did not delay diagnosis. First symptoms and MS type were major contributors to delay: Longer contact-to-evaluation times were seen for gait problems; longer evaluation-to-diagnosis times were seen with depression as a concomitant symptom; and both phases were prolonged for primary progressive MS. Living in mountainous regions correlated with longer contact-to-evaluation times, while faster diagnoses were seen with diagnosis after 2000.

"The observation that the majority of Swiss MS patients were diagnosed in a timely manner regardless of setting and specialty of first physician contact is reassuring, but still too many potentially preventable delays occur in these first steps until diagnosis initiation," the authors write.

"For a faster diagnostic process, awareness for MS as a differential diagnosis of gait disorders should be raised, and an attentive follow-up of possible MS cases with depression as a concomitant first [symptom](#) is needed."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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