

Researchers show Speed of Processing Training effective in multiple sclerosis

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Dr. Chiaravalloti is director of Neuropsychology, Neuroscience and Traumatic Brain Injury Research at Kessler Foundation. Credit: Kessler Foundation

A recent article by Kessler Foundation researchers underscores the importance of processing speed in overall cognitive function in individuals with multiple sclerosis (MS) and their performance of everyday life activities. The article, "A pilot study examining speed of processing training (SPT) to improve processing speed in persons with multiple sclerosis", was published August 27, 2018 in *Frontiers in Neurology*.

The authors are Nancy D. Chiaravalloti, Ph.D., Yael Goverover, Ph.D. (visiting professor from

NYU), Silvana L Costa, Ph.D., and John DeLuca, Ph.D., of Kessler Foundation.

The researchers tested Speed of Processing Training (SPT), in individuals with MS. SPT is a computerized treatment shown to result in persistent improvements in processing speed and everyday function in older adults. There were 21 participants in this [randomized controlled trial](#), 12 in the treatment group and 9 in the control group. The treatment group underwent 10 computerized training sessions over 5 weeks; controls had no treatment. The [treatment](#) group showed significant gains on neuropsychological tests of processing speed, new learning and memory, and activities of daily life.

"These results indicate that processing speed is fundamental to higher order cognitive function in individuals with MS," said Dr. Chiaravalloti, the Foundation's director of Neuropsychology, Neuroscience, and Traumatic Brain Injury Research. "Looking at the impact of cognitive interventions on neuropsychological measures isn't enough, however. The outcomes of our research studies need to include the effects of cognitive rehabilitation protocols on how people perform in their daily lives."

"Developing a cognitive rehabilitation protocol for treating deficits in processing [speed](#) is a priority," summarized Dr. Chiaravalloti. "Reaching that goal means improving the lives of individuals and easing the burdens of caregivers. This study is an important first step toward that goal."

More information: Nancy D. Chiaravalloti et al, A Pilot Study Examining Speed of Processing Training (SPT) to Improve Processing Speed in Persons With Multiple Sclerosis, *Frontiers in Neurology* (2018). [DOI: 10.3389/fneur.2018.00685](https://doi.org/10.3389/fneur.2018.00685)

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