



Check in with Your MS

When and how to track the subtle signs of MS progression

Signs of MS progression aren't always obvious. This tool is here to help you track your abilities over time so you can have a more informed conversation with your healthcare provider. When you share with your healthcare provider how your abilities are changing, they can help take better care of your MS.

You can do your part by clicking through or printing out this document and following the 3 steps detailed on the next few pages:



1. *Think about what's changed since last year*

Make sure you have a good foundation for your tracking routine. Think about how things have changed over the past 12 months and write them down on page 3.



2. *Assess changes over time*

Regularly check in with yourself by marking down any new changes you experience on the table on page 4. Print out more pages as you need them and keep a detailed log.



3. *Advocate for yourself*

Review your tracking notes before each appointment with your healthcare provider and plan what you need to talk about most by answering the questions on page 5. Print out new blank pages as you need them for future appointments.

Noticing changes in your abilities can be difficult because these changes happen slowly over time. Use this tool to help you identify and track changes you may notice over time.



Common early signs of MS progression

You might be surprised to learn that some of the early potential signs of MS disability progression can look like things that many people might brush off or blame on getting older.

Here are a few common early signs that are important to look out for:



Physical

- Tripping or losing balance more frequently than before
- Parking closer to your destination more often than before
- Lacking the energy to do usual activities that you used to be able to do
- Having to rest while doing an activity that you once could have done without a break



Cognitive

- Struggling to find the right words more often than before
- Increased difficulty remembering appointments
- Increased difficulty keeping up with conversations at work
- Using a calendar or reminder app more often than you used to

It's important to remember that progression can show up as both physical and cognitive changes, and these aren't all the signs of MS disability progression.

It's important to track your symptoms so you can give your healthcare provider a full picture of what you experience.

Tracking changes in your abilities is a commitment to your health



Use this to track changes over time

1 Think about what's changed since last year

It's important to remember that your abilities may have already changed. Look back to a specific point in time a year ago and think about what you were doing. Then think about how your abilities may have changed since then. Remember, changes can be both physical and cognitive.

Write your thoughts here:

Point in time: _____

What I was doing then:

What I am doing now:

Example:

Point in time: *Last summer*

What I was doing then:

Walking around my neighborhood without a break, cooking every day, participating in meetings at work

What I am doing now:

Needing to sit on a park bench on walks, having trouble standing at the counter long enough to cook, having trouble concentrating in meetings at work

My current MS treatment is doing enough to help maintain my abilities



Strongly agree



Somewhat agree



Disagree



Not sure

Tip

Check the list on the previous page for potential signs of progression.

2 Assess changes over time

Take a look at what you wrote on the previous page and compare it to the list below. Under “Baseline” write today’s date, then go through each potential change and check the box corresponding to what you’ve noticed in your own abilities.



At every change of season, look back at this worksheet and fill in the next column.

	BASELINE	CHANGES OVER TIME			
	Today's Date:	Season:	Season:	Season:	Season:
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CHANGES IN PHYSICAL ABILITIES					
Tripping or losing balance more than usual	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to walk as far as usual	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling more worn out when using stairs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to exercise as usual	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rushing to get to the bathroom more often	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHANGES IN COGNITIVE ACTIVITIES					
“Losing words” or forgetting what you were about to say more often	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased difficulty remembering things, like appointments	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Struggling with multitasking more than usual	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased difficulty keeping up with conversation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IMPACT—Please check all that apply to fill in the blank:					
Because of the above signs, I have had to make changes to the way I...	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Live at home	<input type="checkbox"/> Live at home	<input type="checkbox"/> Live at home	<input type="checkbox"/> Live at home
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Work
		<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



3 Advocate for yourself

Be ready for your next conversation with your healthcare provider by thinking about your responses from the section above and answering the questions below. **Bring this worksheet to your appointment and use it to help guide the conversation.**

Review your notes since your last visit with your healthcare provider. Do you see any patterns in how your abilities have changed? If so, note them here.

Do you have any questions about these changes that you'd like to ask your healthcare provider? Write them down here.

Keep it going

Remember to check in regularly. Think of it as a promise to yourself, and a way to make sure you and your healthcare team always have the best and most up-to-date information about how you're doing.

Tip

If you have a care partner, think about asking them to come to your appointment with you. Review this tool with them before you go, and speak up during the appointment to make sure your healthcare provider knows about your concerns.



Keep exploring at
[RediscoverMS.com](https://www.rediscoverms.com)

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