

Research Reporter



Welcome to the April 2025 edition of our guide to what's new in MS science

Research Round up

December: Researchers create an 'atlas of MS brain cells' which could help personalise MS treatment



Working as part of an international team, researchers at our Edinburgh Centre for MS Research have created an 'atlas of MS brain cells'. The team analysed brain tissue donated by people with MS after they died – including tissue from the MS Society Tissue Bank.

They found that they could separate people with MS into four groups, based on how their brain cells behaved.

MS affects each person differently. Research like this could pave the way for more personalised treatment of MS, rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach.

[Read more about this study](#)

January: New study sheds light on the safety of MS treatments during pregnancy



A large study involving over 3700 pregnancies in people with MS, using data from the German MS and Pregnancy Register, found that most disease modifying therapies (DMTs) don't increase the risk of miscarriage, premature birth or major congenital anomalies. These findings should help to provide reassurance and guide safer treatment choices during pregnancy.

[Read more about the safety of DMTs during pregnancy](#)

January: Shaping MS research: meet Research Network member Chris Rafaluk



Our Research Network is a group of people affected by MS who help shape our research programme. Chris Rafaluk has been a Research Network member since 2019. We spoke to Chris about his motivations for joining the Network and why he believes diversity of thought is essential for shaping meaningful research.

[Read Chris' blog](#)

February: Behind the headlines: does eating fish reduce MS progression?



A recent Swedish study of over 1700 people with MS found a link between eating more lean and oily fish and a reduced risk of disability progression. Although we're not sure of the exact reasons why, fish may help by reducing inflammation and protecting the brain.

Ultimately no 'one' diet works for all – it's a personal choice. And a healthy balanced diet can help people with MS to stay in the best health possible and guard against other issues, like heart disease and strokes.

[Read more about this story](#)

February: MS research is for everyone: Building a more inclusive workforce



Joy Amobi and Laura Khaukha recently interned at the UK MS Register as part of the HDR UK Black Internship Programme, which aims to address the lack of diversity in the research sector. We spoke to Joy and Laura about their experiences and the value of programmes like this.

[Read about their experience](#)

March: Leaving a lasting legacy: my visit to the MS Society Tissue Bank



The MS Society Tissue Bank plays a crucial role in advancing our understanding of MS. This vital resource allows people to donate their brain and spinal cord for MS research after their death. Our Legacies Lead, Sarah, told us about her recent visit to the Tissue Bank.

[Read more about Sarah's visit](#)

March: A spotlight on our women's health research



For this year's International Women's Day, we highlighted our current research into women's health and MS, from how periods can worsen symptoms, to why being pregnant can reduce relapses.

[Read more about our research into women's health](#)

Following the trial trail

ChariotMS: The 200th person has joined the ChariotMS trial, reaching our recruitment goal. The first results are expected in 2027.

The phase 2 trial is testing whether cladribine can help people with advanced MS to maintain arm and hand function. Traditionally, MS clinical trials have used walking ability as the main measurement of whether a drug is effective, excluding people who use wheelchairs. ChariotMS offers some people who have never been eligible the chance to take part in a clinical trial.

[Read more](#)

Funding new research

We've committed to funding several new projects since the last Research Reporter, including:

Spinal cord imaging in people with MS

Dr Rozanna Meijboom and her team at the University of Edinburgh aim to develop imaging tools to measure nerve damage throughout the whole spinal cord in people with MS.

[Read more](#)

Studying early lesions in MS

In MS, before myelin is damaged, subtle changes happen in the brain, including the loss of myelin-producing brain cells, and the build-up of immune cells. These early changes are called pre-active lesions. Dr Margareta Clarke and her team at the University of Nottingham School of Medicine aim to develop MRI techniques to identify these pre-active lesions, allowing for earlier intervention and potentially preventing myelin damage.

[Read more](#)

Can changes in brain connectivity predict progression?

Currently, there is no way to accurately predict progression in MS. This research aims to use a new brain imaging technique to predict how MS will progress in individuals. By studying the brain's communication patterns, Dr Lukas Rier and his team at the University of Nottingham hope to identify early signs of worsening disease and develop more effective treatments.

[Read more](#)

And finally...

In March we launched our Spring Stop MS Match Funding Appeal, a six-week mission to raise £500,000 for MS research. Every donation made to our [Stop MS Appeal](#) during this time will be doubled by two generous supporters, up to a total of £250,000. This means every £10 donation becomes £20, at no extra cost to the donor.

Look out for powerful stories and content in our direct mail pack, on our website, in emails, in our shops and MS Matters.

[Watch our short film from the Edinburgh Centre for MS Research, and find out how donations can help stop MS.](#)

If you'd like to know more about our research – get in touch!

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