



## Dysautonomia

MSA is characterized as both a movement and an autonomic neurological disorder. The most suitable specialist to diagnose it is a movement disorder neurologist. In addition to what has already been mentioned here, people with MSA may experience a loss of bladder or bowel control, abnormal sweating, sexual impotence in men, sleep apnea and REM Behavior Disorder (RBD), which involves movements during sleep, that may seem as if the person is “acting out” their dreams. In fact, some researchers have suggested that RBD may possibly provide an early indication of an eventual MSA diagnosis.

## Types of Treatment

Since MSA’s main features involve symptoms on “multiple” levels, the known treatments are usually the same treatments used for similar diseases, such as PD. Since MSA is characterized as both autonomic and movement related, physicians in those fields would be the most appropriate specialists. Drugs such as those to treat muscle rigidity, slowness and tremor may also help someone with MSA. Blood pressure enhancing meds, increasing salt in one’s diet, changing one’s position during sleep or the use of a CPAP or BiPAP for sleep apnea may help as well. Some researchers have also speculated that different forms of physical therapy and increased exercise may act as neuroprotectors, thereby slowing the disease.

## Reason for Hope

There is currently no cure for MSA. However, there are medications and therapies that can alleviate some of the more disabling effects, thus, greatly assisting in maintaining or improving the quality of one’s life. In recent years, new research has given us hope that we will soon, “turn the corner” in our quest to find reliable biomarkers, more definitive ways to diagnose MSA and distinguish it from similar diseases, such as Parkinson’s, Lewy Body Dementia and Pure Autonomic Failure (PAF).

Great strides have also been made in developing new medications that will help treat, and possibly slow the disease. Although, some people suffering with MSA succumb after 10 years, other patients do not. Some MSA patients have been known to live up to 20 years, after their initial diagnosis. As research into the origins of the disease continue, there is increased confidence among researchers and advocates today that very soon, we will discover new therapies to treat and slow the disease. We believe that a cure to this devastating neurological disease is on the horizon. Please help us on this great quest!

# Is MSA All In Your Head?



Take the first step toward a diagnosis...

[www.DefeatMSA.org](http://www.DefeatMSA.org)

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