

## Stream Event Talking Points

Thank you for joining the National MS Society's Stream to End MS campaign in raising funds and awareness for multiple sclerosis. Below are suggested talking points to help educate your audience throughout your stream.

### Suggested Talking Points and Society Facts:

- I'm here today to raise funds and awareness for the National MS Society, an organization whose **vision is a world free of MS.**
- The **Society's mission** is that people affected by MS can live their best lives as we stop MS in its tracks, restore what has been lost and end MS forever.
- Join the movement and help me support the Society through Stream to End MS.
- No donation is too small; every dollar counts!
- So, what does the Society do?
  - They are helping each person address the challenges of living with MS by funding cutting-edge research, driving change through advocacy and providing programs and services that help people with MS and their families move their lives forward.
  - The Society is a 501(c)3 charitable organization
- It's powerful to share your personal story/connection to MS and why you want to Stream to End MS:
  - I'm here because [\_\_\_\_\_]
  - I'm joining Stream to End MS because [\_\_\_\_\_]
  - I Stream to End MS for [\_\_\_\_\_]
- Donations from people like you directly fund MS breakthroughs!
  - Paved the way for all of the nearly 20 treatment options available today – none of which existed just 30 years ago.
  - Brought the world together to set standards for diagnosing MS quickly and accurately, and to crystalize the distinction between relapsing-remitting and progressive MS.
  - Funded over 1,000 early-career researchers who have since been behind nearly every major breakthrough and treatment.
  - Driven billions of dollars in federal research funding, won state-level reforms for quality respite services and home modification tax credits and ensured that the voice of MS is always heard.
  - Built a network of resources and events that help people affected by MS live less isolated, more informed, happier lives — whether that means one newly diagnosed person finding the education program they need online or 50,000 people benefiting from the in-depth, personalized support of MS Navigators.
- Please visit [nationalMSSociety.org](https://nationalMSSociety.org) to learn more about the Society and how you can support.

## General MS Facts

- Multiple sclerosis is a chronic, unpredictable disease of the central nervous system (CNS), which is made up of the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves. It is thought to be an immune-mediated disorder, in which the immune system incorrectly attacks healthy tissue in the CNS.
- In MS, damage in the CNS interferes with the transmission of nerve signals between the brain and spinal cord and other parts of the body.
- Most people are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, although children and older adults do develop it.
- More than two to three times as many women as men develop MS, and this gender difference has been increasing over the past 50 years.
- Studies suggest that genetic factors increase the risk of developing MS, but there is no evidence that MS is directly inherited.
- Environmental factors, such as low vitamin D and cigarette smoking have also been shown to increase the risk of MS.
- MS occurs in most ethnic groups, including African Americans, Asians and Hispanics/Latinx, but is most common in Caucasians of northern European ancestry.
- Worldwide, more than 2.3 million people have a diagnosis of MS.
- In the United States, a recently completed prevalence study funded by the National MS Society, estimates that nearly 1 million people over the age of 18 live with MS.
- While there is no way to predict with any certainty how MS will progress, four basic disease courses have been defined:
  - Clinically isolated syndrome — first episode of neurologic symptoms caused by inflammation and demyelination in the central nervous system.
  - Relapsing-remitting MS — characterized by periods of relapses (new symptoms or a new worsening of older symptoms also called attacks or exacerbations) that subside, with full or partial recovery, and no disease progression (worsening) between attacks.
  - Secondary progressive MS — follows relapsing-remitting MS in some people and is characterized by a more progressive course, with or without relapses or new MRI activity.
  - Primary progressive MS — characterized by a gradual but steady progression of disability from the onset of symptoms, with few or no relapses or remissions.
- Symptoms of MS are unpredictable and vary in type and severity from one person to another and in the same person over time. Symptoms may disappear or remit completely, or they may persist and may worsen over time.
- The most common symptoms of MS include fatigue, numbness and tingling, blurred vision, double vision, weakness, poor coordination, imbalance, pain, depression and problems with memory and concentration. Less commonly, MS may cause tremor, paralysis and blindness.