



DARRIN (CENTER), DIAGNOSED IN 2007

walk  
**MS**<sup>®</sup>

Team Captain  
*Guide*



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**A CURE  
IS ON THE LINE.**







## Thank You for Registering

Ending multiple sclerosis for good will take all of us. It's why Walk MS® matters so much. And it's why you matter so much. Walk MS helps us team up with friends, loved ones and co-workers to change the world for everyone affected by MS and this year, we are so excited to share the new, energizing Walk MS with you!

Together, we will end MS forever.

## Together We'll Go Further

Teams strengthen the Walk MS community by connecting you with others who are just as passionate about creating a world free of MS. Whether you've signed up as captain of a Society-hosted Walk MS event or are creating your own experience through Walk MS: Your Way, this guide will provide the tools you need to personalize your Walk MS experience, engage your entire team, meet your goals, and have fun along the way!



## >Welcome fellow Team Captain!

From one Captain to another, who's ready to have some fun?! From rallying your friends, family and coworkers together, to designing team swag and more, you're going to find yourself creating memories to last a lifetime. While it can be scary stepping outside of your comfort zone to ask for support, you have to use that voice of yours and spread as much awareness as you can to help make bigger strides towards a cure for MS. So get out there and network, network, network, and before you know it, you'll be a fundraising champion making such a difference in the MS community! **Let's do this!"**

— Lyndsay Wright,  
Team Captain, Demyelinate This

# Checklist for Team *Success*

- ☐ You've signed up to be a Team Captain, now what?! Here's a checklist of easy ways to rally your friends, family, and coworkers around Walk MS®. More details on all of these can be found in this guide. We encourage you to share them with your current and future teammates, too.
- ☒ **Register for Walk MS® — done!**
- ☐ **Join the Walk MS Team Captain Facebook page** — Meet team captains from across the country, exchange fundraising tips and share photos and stories about what makes your team unique! Be sure to also "Like" our **Walk MS Facebook page** to get the latest and greatest information about Walk MS!
- ☐ **Set personal and team goals** — Establishing a goal is an easy way to maintain motivation as well as give you and your team a benchmark for success.
- ☐ **Kickoff your fundraising** — Show your commitment by making a self-donation to start your fundraising.
- ☐ **Utilize your Fundraising Center** to share your story, recruit team members and ask for donations.
- ☐ **Know Your Networks** — Understanding and connecting with your network can be key to your team success! Use our **Know Your Networks worksheet** to help identify people to ask to join your team and donate. You can also log in to your Fundraising Center for templated solicitation emails.
- ☐ **Get social** — Launch a Facebook Fundraiser through your Walk MS Fundraising Center and share your fundraising link on channels like Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, Snapchat and TikTok. You can even request donations through Venmo and PayPal or add a **QR code** on flyers!
- ☐ **Download our NEW DonorDrive app** to take Walk MS with you anywhere you go! Keep track of donations, send emails, deposit checks, create your own QR code and more – all from the palm of your hand.

**Note:** The previous app will not function for 2024 events, so you must download the DonorDrive app.



# FUNDRAISING TOOLS & Resources

- **Fundraising Center** — It's easier than ever to raise money using your Fundraising Center. **Participants who customize their personal page fundraiser 5X more** than those who don't!

- » Share your story for why you Walk MS® on your personal and team pages.
- » Set and track your fundraising goals.
- » Create a custom URL to take donors directly to your personal and team pages.
- » Import contacts into your contact list and send emails to recruit team members and ask for donations.
- » Track donations and thank your donors.
- » Set up donation incentives to encourage donors and reward them for their support.
- » Launch a Facebook Fundraiser.
- » Add milestones to celebrate progress on the way to reaching your fundraising goal!

- **Download the NEW DonorDrive app** — Just like the features in your Fundraising Center, the new DonorDrive app will help you fundraise, track your steps and more for all Society events. **Note:** The previous app will not function for 2024 events, so you must download the new DonorDrive app.

- **Put the FUN in fundraising** — Beyond the camaraderie and fun that comes with participating as a team, is knowing your impact will go that much further. We have plenty of **fundraising ideas** to get you started.

Visit our **website for fun ideas** like our **50 State Challenge**, **Fundraising Bingo** and **Adopt a Sticker**!

- **Videos and images** — Add customized Walk MS images and videos to your social media channels, emails, and signatures. Access our Fundraising Toolkit to download ready-to-use team material such as profile photos, cover photos, downloadable posters, and information about ordering Join Me Trading Cards — perfect for growing your team.



## TIPS FOR SETTING GOALS

- **Goals should be realistic, but significant** — if it requires hard work to attain, it will be a source of pride for your team. Collaborating with your team on setting the goals will help everyone rally around them. Check out our **Goal Setting Worksheet** to get started!
- Goals can be set for **personal and team fundraising** as well as for **team member recruitment**!
- **100%** — make sure it is a goal to have every team member achieve active fundraiser status by encouraging them to make a self-donation or ask others to donate to their fundraising effort.
- **Share your progress** — be sure to share your goals, as well as increase your goals as you meet them!



# Team Spirit

Being part of an important cause is great motivation. But here are some other powerful and fun ways to motivate your Walk MS® team too.

## Inspire Your Team to Fundraise

Sending regular updates to your team members can help keep their fundraising on track. Share your own fundraising ideas and personal fundraising progress to help inspire them. Highlight a fundraising success story within your own team. Don't forget, you can also send emails from your Fundraising Center to easily communicate with your team all at once.

## Preparing for Event Day

Here are some tips to make your team's Walk MS experience memorable:

- Show your team spirit by ordering custom designed team shirts to commemorate your Walk MS experience. Our national Walk MS T-shirt vendor has great solutions for team shirts. Not only that, they will donate \$1 for every shirt ordered (\$2 for every sweatshirt) back to your Walk MS team! Visit the [National MS Society Team Shirt Store](#).
- Designate a time and area to meet your team on event day. If you're not familiar with the site, bring a brightly colored flag or make a large team sign so members can easily find you.
- Planning a unique experience for Walk MS: Your Way? Brainstorm with your team members prior to event-day to learn about what type of components may excite them!

- Wear your team T-shirt or come up with a creative theme that your team can rally around.
- Personalize "I Walk For" stickers to wear to your shirt on event day.
- Create inspiring posters to carry during the walk.
- Take pictures and post them on social media. Tag your teammates and tag the event. Let everyone know what you're doing and be sure to include the link to your personal or team fundraising page. Event Day is a great opportunity to ask for more donations! Be sure to use the hashtag **#WalkMS**
- Gather your team after the event for a picnic or after-party. This is a great way to celebrate and reflect on the incredible day you've had and make the fun last a little longer!

## Post-Event Celebration

Don't miss the opportunity to thank your donors and team members post-event. Be sure to share how their support is making an impact in the lives of those affected by MS. We've provided some sample impact statements in this guide to help you out. Also, don't forget even though your event is over, you still have through September 30, 2024 to continue to ask for donations. Share photos from event day and ask those who didn't contribute yet to help you reach your goal!



# Fueling the *Mission*

## Your Story

Reaching your fundraising goals (and beyond!) is a breeze with the right resources. We've included talking points and the latest on our progress to a cure, which you can include in your outreach to potential donors and team members. Sharing your story and the reason why you participate in

Walk MS® can take your fundraising to new levels.

## Elevator Speeches

Creating a polished elevator speech that incorporates your personal story, the National

MS Society's mission, and what you are looking to accomplish in your fundraising efforts is a great way to get started. Look at the example below and shape it into a statement that describes you, your unique Walk MS team, and what you hope to accomplish!

"I am raising funds to change the world for people living with multiple sclerosis, or MS. I will be participating in Walk MS® with a goal of raising [insert goal amount]. The National MS Society is

dedicated to a world free of MS, but they can't do it without our help. It's faster and easier than ever to support this cause. Help me reach my goal by making a donation to make a difference for the nearly 1 million people living with MS in the United States. Together we will do whatever it takes until we reach our ultimate goal: a cure."

## MS Facts and Talking Points

- MS, an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system, interrupts the flow of information within the brain and between the brain and body.
- Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis.
- MS affects more than 2.3 million people worldwide and nearly one million people in the U.S.
- Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, with at least two to three times more women than men being diagnosed with the disease.



KENNETH (CENTER), DIAGNOSED IN 2004





DARRIN (CENTER), DIAGNOSED IN 2007



ANUSKA (CENTER),  
DIAGNOSED IN 2008



ROSA (LEFT),  
DIAGNOSED IN 2021

## Why Walk MS® Is So *Important*

Collectively, Walk MS fundraising efforts have helped accelerate breakthroughs that change lives and will end MS forever. Your dedicated support fuels our mission: We will cure MS while empowering people affected by MS to live their best lives. Below are some highlights of the work we do thanks to your leadership as Team Captain!

- People affected by MS have access to around-the-clock Society information, support and resources to help them live their best lives.
- The Society is the largest private funder of MS research in the world, leading to discoveries that have transformed treatment and care.
- The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are leading to better understanding and moving us closer to a world free of MS.
- To date, Walk MS participants, volunteers and donors have raised over \$1 billion to stop MS in its tracks, restore what's been lost and end MS forever.
- In 2021, the Society marked 75 years of progress that has transformed the MS movement.

**Together, we achieved as much progress in the last five years as the 70 that preceded it.**

Breakthrough MS®, a five-year fundraising effort, was conceived to mark the beginning of the end of MS. Highlights from the Breakthrough MS Campaign include the launch of the MS Navigator® program in 2017, the approval of the first therapy in pediatric MS in 2018, and the launch of Ask an MS Expert in 2020. Learn more about how **Breakthrough MS** has changed the lives for those living with MS.

- Looking ahead, our newest **Strategic Plan** is focused on addressing the unique experiences of all people affected by MS. Our goals are clear. We want to:
  - » Accelerate cures through global leadership.
  - » Improve access to personalized, affordable, high-quality MS healthcare.
  - » Empower people affected by MS to solve everyday challenges.
  - » Strengthen the MS movement through more and deeper connections.





# Living with MS

For participants living with multiple sclerosis, Walk MS® is an opportunity to connect with others affected by the disease and get information about Society resources to help you move your life with MS forward.

In 2024, participants who signify they are living with MS at registration will receive exclusive Living with MS swag which will be distributed on event day at The Center — our new location for participants to learn about Society programs and resources. On a case-by-case basis, swag may be available for individuals living with MS who are unable to attend the event.



## Fundraising Incentives

### Fundraising Event T-Shirt

Walk MS participants who go the extra mile with their fundraising qualify for special prizes!

**New this year, T-shirts will be mailed to participants that raise \$100 or more. Check your event details page for more information. T-shirts will not be available for pick-up at the event. Walk MS: Your Way participants will receive their shirt by mail. Visit the [Walk MS: Your Way details page](#) for the mailing schedule.**



### Rewards Store

Earn a point for every dollar you raise and extra points for completing special challenges. Once you earn 250 points, you can redeem your points at any time for Walk MS branded merchandise at our Walk MS Rewards Store. There are many ways to redeem your points. For instance, when you reach 1,000 points you can redeem all 1,000 points for one prize or redeem for two 500-point prizes.

### Opportunities to earn extra points:

- Set a Goal = 10 points
- Launch a Facebook Fundraiser from the dashboard = 15 points
- Register by January 31, 2024 = 50 points
- Earn double points for all fundraising on World MS Day, May 30, 2024
- It's Go Time promotions - keep an eye on your inbox for special challenges to earn extra points

**For more information** on the Walk MS Rewards store and to get started on earning points, visit the [Prizes, Clubs and Rewards page](#).

## 250 LEVEL



Tumbler

Bucket Hat



## 500 LEVEL

Traveler Shoulder  
Crossbody Bag



Comfort Wash Unisex  
Garment-Dyed  
Long-Sleeve T-Shirt

## 750 LEVEL



J America® Adult Vintage  
Heather Pullover Hooded  
Sweatshirt

Call of the Wild®  
Stainless Steel  
Mug



## 1,000 LEVEL

Casely® Power Pod



Pack-N-Go® Pullover Jacket

## 2,500 LEVEL

Cutter & Buck® Rainier  
Insulated Full Zip  
Puffer Vest



Darling Duffel Puff Puff



Fitted



Unisex

## 5,000 LEVEL

Trimark® Beechriver  
Roots73 Down Jacket



Airpods®



[walkMSrewards.org](https://walkMSrewards.org)

The National MS Society reserves the right to substitute a reward of equal or greater value at any time.



# Fundraising Clubs

At Walk MS®, there is no limit to what's possible, so set your fundraising goal as high as you can! Walk MS has exclusive fundraising clubs to keep you motivated as you walk towards a world free of MS.



**Silver**  
Fundraising Club



**Gold**  
Fundraising Club

## Silver Fundraising Club — \$500

As a Silver Fundraising Club member, you will enjoy Top Fundraiser benefits, such as a lanyard and Silver Club credential to commemorate your hard work!

## Gold Fundraising Club — \$1,000

So, you've made it to the Gold Fundraising Club—what an impressive feat! Here, you'll enjoy Top Fundraiser benefits, including a lanyard, Gold Club credential and exclusive swag as a token of our thanks for your hard work to end MS.

**The 2024 deadline to qualify for Fundraising Clubs is September 30, 2024.**



HEIDI (CENTER), DIAGNOSED IN 2009

# We Are Here to *Help*

We are grateful for your efforts to raise awareness and funds for people affected by MS, and we want to make sure your experience is extraordinary at every turn. If you have questions, need assistance or just have a comment to share, please contact us. We'd love to hear from you.

## FAQs

### **What are the different ways to participate in Walk MS®?**

You can participate in-person at a Society-hosted Walk MS event, as a virtual walker for a Society-hosted Walk MS event, or you can create your own day-of-experience with Walk MS: Your Way. No matter how you participate in Walk MS, you will feel the same support, have access to the same powerful tools and celebrate with others who are just as passionate as you are about ending MS.

### **What is Walk MS: Your Way?**

Launched in 2022, **Walk MS: Your Way** was created to provide Walk MS participants with an accessible, flexible option to celebrate their own way. Regardless of geographic location, anyone can raise funds and awareness in a meaningful way alongside friends, family, coworkers and more! You can pick a date and time that works best for you. However, we recommend holding your Walk MS: Your Way event from March to June, when hundreds of Walk MS events will take place across the country. We also recommend choosing a route or activity that is accessible for mobility devices and offers options for everyone. When you Walk MS: Your Way, let your creativity be your guide as you create your own Walk MS adventure.

### **How do I turn in donations?**

For the fastest processing of your donations, encourage donors to give online through your custom fundraising page. If you receive checks, the quickest deposit method is to upload them using the Check Deposit feature on the new DonorDrive App (tap on "Deposit a Check").

If needed, you can mail your check donations to your local Society Office. Mail your donations (made out to National MS Society) with a completed **Donation Tracking form**.

### **National MS Society, ATTN: Walk MS**

#### **› Find your local office address**

If you mail in your donations, it may take up to five weeks to process donations during peak event times. For more information, please contact Fundraising Support at 855-372-1331 or **[FundraisingSupport@nmss.org](mailto:FundraisingSupport@nmss.org)**.

### **Who should checks be made payable to?**

Please make checks payable to National MS Society. Please be sure to write the participant's name, event, and event year on the memo line of each check (e.g., "John Smith, Walk MS®: Philadelphia 2024"). If you receive a check payable to your team, simply write "National MS Society" above the team name entry. If the check is made out to you, please endorse the check payable to the National MS Society.



**What is a matching gift?**

A matching gift is a gift from a donor's employer that matches the donor's original gift, often dollar-for-dollar. You can significantly increase your fundraising by asking your donors to apply for matching gifts if their employer offers them. Visit our Matching Gifts Guide to see if your employer offers a matching gifts program and to learn more about the matching gifts process.

**How long are Walk MS® routes?**

Most Walk MS routes feature one- and three-mile options that are fully accessible for scooters and wheelchairs, by walker or with a cane. Please visit [walkMS.org](http://walkMS.org), search for your location and check the Route Map and Details section of your Walk Details page for more specific details.

## Contact Us

Our Fundraising Support Team is here to answer all your questions about Walk MS and fundraising, the event website, using your Fundraising Center, utilizing our DonorDrive app and more.

**Contact our Fundraising Support Team at:**

855-372-1331 or [FundraisingSupport@nmss.org](mailto:FundraisingSupport@nmss.org)

*Thank You*

**for being a Team Captain at Walk MS®!**



**A CURE  
IS ON THE LINE.**