

2023 REAL TALK MS Excerpt with Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD
Which cognitive functions are commonly affected by MS?

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- JON STRUM: 00:02 Which cognitive functions are commonly affected by MS and what are some of the early signs of cognitive impairment?
- NANCY
CHIARAVALLOTI: 00:09 The most common cognitive deficit that we see in persons with multiple sclerosis is in processing speed. So processing speed is a term that refers to the following along and being able to process information quickly as it comes in after processing speed. We also see quite a bit of deficit in new learning and memory. So that's also a very common cognitive deficit we see in persons with MS.
- CHIARAVALLOTI: 00:35 Some people also experience other cognitive deficits, such as problems with executive functioning or attention, but those are less common than processing speed and new learning in memory. When someone feels like they are starting to experience cognitive deficits, what they typically report is that they're feeling cloudy or they're having trouble following along in a conversation. And that's particularly common when you have multiple people engaging in the conversation or you have a you're in a very distracted environment such as a cocktail party.
- CHIARAVALLOTI: 01:11 So people may experience those types of things early on that kind of clue them into the fact that they may be starting to have some cognitive problems.