NEUROLOGY GROUP of BERGEN COUNTY

Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the brain and spinal cord that results in a disruption of the flow of information between the brain and the body. It is felt to be an immune-mediated inflammatory disease, but the exact cause of MS remains uncertain. Inflammation of parts of the central nervous system produces a wide variety of different neurological symptoms. People typically have episodes of symptoms occurring months or years apart, and affecting different parts of the brain or spinal cord. These attacks produce significant physical disability within 20-25 years in over 30% of patients.

Patients suspected of having symptoms suggesting MS will undergo a complete history and a detailed neurological examination. Additional testing generally includes MRI scans (of the brain and/or spine, depending on the presenting symptoms), blood tests looking for conditions that can mimic MS, and evoked potentials (VER, BAER and/or SSER). Arriving at a diagnosis of possible, probable or definitive MS depends on a combination of all of this information.

Treatment of Multiple Sclerosis consists of medications that affect the immune system (known as disease-modifying drugs of DMDs), which try to reduce the frequency of relapses and slow the progression of the disease. Many different medications are available (both in oral and injectable forms), and your physician will try to determine which medication is best suited for your treatment. There are also other therapies that attempt to relieve or modify the symptoms that occur with this disease (known as symptom-management medications). Physical and/or occupational therapy can also be helpful in improving functional abilities in people with MS.

1200 East Ridgewood Avenue • East Wing, Suite 208 • Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450 • Tel: (201) 444-0868 • Fax: (201) 447-0581