Multiple Sclerosis

What is Multiple Sclerosis (MS)?
• MS is a disease that affects the brain and spinal cord.
• The nerve fibers of the brain and spinal cord are protected by myelin tissue.
• In MS, the myelin is damaged in different areas leaving scar tissue.
• The damaged nerves causes communication problems between your brain and the rest of your body. This results in the different symptoms of MS.

What causes Multiple Sclerosis?
• The exact cause of MS is unknown. It is believed that the damage to the myelin is a result from an abnormal response by the body’s immune system.
• The immune system defends the body against foreign invaders. In autoimmune diseases, the body attacks its own tissue.
• MS is thought to be an autoimmune disease and myelin is the major target of that immune attack.

How is Multiple Sclerosis Diagnosed?
• Diagnosing the disease often involves:
  o Symptoms: evidence from the person’s history
  o Signs: examination by a doctor
  o Lab Tests: Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Evoked Potential (EP), cerebrospinal fluid sample and blood tests

What are the Common Symptoms of Multiple Sclerosis?
• Fatigue
• Pain
• Heat sensitivity
• Vision changes
• Spasticity
• Memory problems
• Symptons may appear in any combination and be mild to severe. They may be experienced for unpredictable periods of time.
• Symptoms alone do not indicate MS.

How is Multiple Sclerosis Treated?
• Medications can slow down the course of the disease. Medication can prevent brain lesions, and new relapses. No medication will cure multiple sclerosis

For Additional Information:
• National Multiple Sclerosis Society – www.nationalmssociety.org