Healthcare Professional Guide

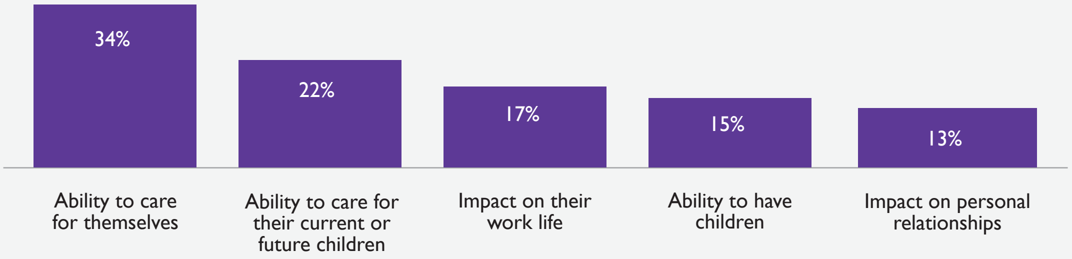
“Women & Their MS Journey”

Survey Results & Patient Conversation Starters

To better understand what women experience early on in their multiple sclerosis (MS) journey and help them prepare for life with MS, Teva Pharmaceuticals conducted a nationwide survey of 1,000 U.S. females diagnosed within the last five years to identify what they worried about most in the beginning and what kind of communication they had with their healthcare team about these issues. In partnership with nonprofit organization Can Do MS, Teva Pharmaceuticals developed this guide for healthcare professionals (HCPs) to share key findings from the survey and provide conversation starters to help healthcare professionals have deeper, more meaningful dialogues about the topics that really matter to their female patients with MS.

The survey looked at three key lifestyle buckets for women with MS – work, personal relationships and family planning – and revealed that an MS diagnosis raised significant concerns for women in these areas.

Top Concerns for Women with MS after Diagnosis:



Despite these worries, 98% of women surveyed felt many of their concerns weren’t addressed with their healthcare team at the time of their diagnosis.

Yet, 71% believe that having a conversation with their doctor earlier or more openly about them would have made their first six months after diagnosis easier.

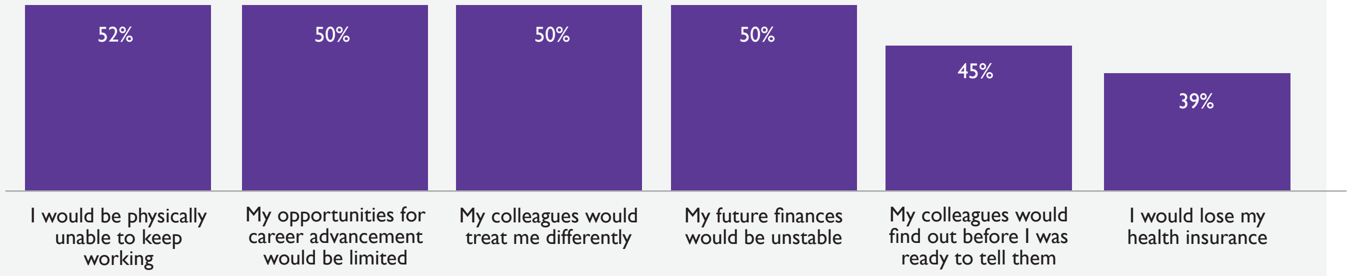
In an effort to help facilitate such conversations, we have shared in this guide some of the more compelling concerns reported by women in the areas of work, relationships and family planning. We’ve also included some suggested conversation starters to help you get right to the heart of what matters to your female patients as quickly as possible.

Please note, the information is for all MS healthcare professionals and the statistics and recommended conversation starters should only be considered as they relate to your specific area of expertise. If a question or topic is out of your area of expertise, it could be helpful to suggest resources or other professional experts who can provide this kind of information to your patients.

Women with MS Worried the Most about Whether They Could Physically Keep Working

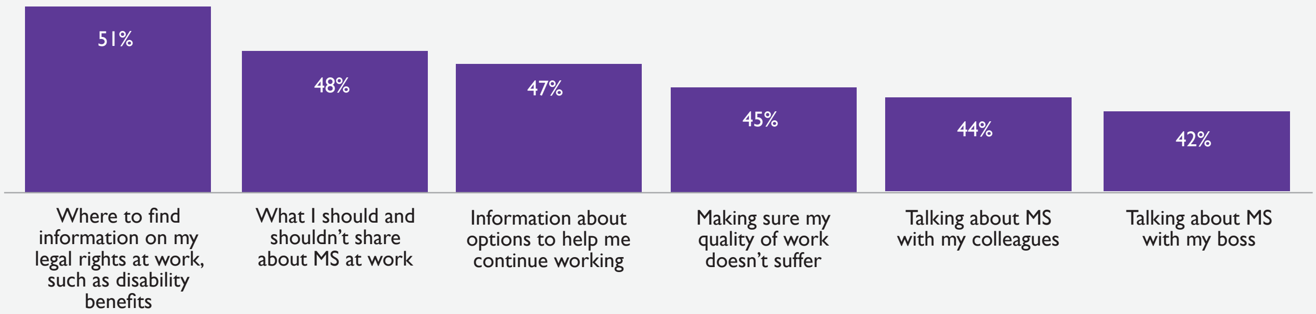
- It’s clear that women with MS have concerns about their work life. 93% agree that the course of their career or work life would be significantly better if they had been given more information at the time of their MS diagnosis.

Work Concerns Women with MS Had at the Time of Their Diagnosis



*Asked among US women ages 18+ diagnosed with MS in the last 5 years who were employed at the time of their diagnosis

What Women with MS Wish They Had Asked Their HCPs about at Diagnosis



*Asked among US women ages 18+ diagnosed with MS in the last 5 years who were employed at the time of their diagnosis

- When asked why they had not spoken to an HCP about their work concerns, 31% of women said they didn’t feel comfortable speaking with their healthcare professional about work concerns, 31% said their HCPs never brought it up, and 30% said they didn’t know how to initiate the conversation.

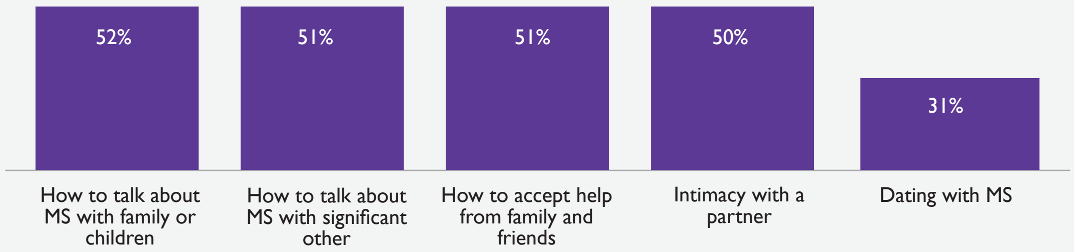
Work and Career: Conversation Starters

- How MS symptoms might affect work
- Tips to help minimize fatigue and other symptoms at work
- Tips to manage cognitive challenges at work
- Tips for modifying the work environment
- What happens if they need to stop working?
- When and what patients should/shouldn’t share about their MS diagnosis at work
- Where to go for guidance on talking to an employer, employees, and colleagues about diagnosis
- Where to find information on legal rights and disability benefits
- Resources to learn more (see recommendations at end of guide)

Women with MS Wish They Had More Guidance from HCPs When it Came to their Personal Relationships

- 86% of women who were single at the time of their diagnosis were concerned their MS diagnosis would impact their ability to find a significant other. For women who had a significant other 58% were concerned their relationship would be negatively impacted.
- Women were also concerned that their relationships with family members may be negatively impacted (53%) as well as with work colleagues (47%) and friends (43%).

Relationship Topics Women with MS Wish They Had Asked about at Diagnosis



- When asked why they didn't speak to their HCP about personal relationship concerns, 38% of women said they didn't feel comfortable speaking with their healthcare professional. 21% said their HCPs never brought it up, 21% said they didn't know how to initiate the conversation, and 19% didn't think there was enough time to ask about them.

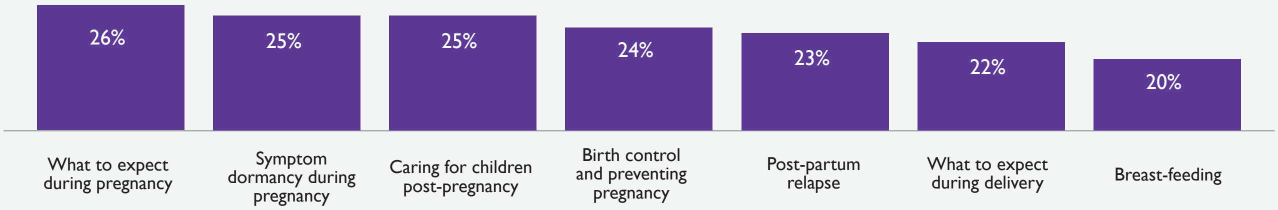
Personal Relationships: Conversation Starters

- How MS symptoms might impact the ability to date/find a partner
- How MS symptoms might impact the ability to be intimate with a partner
- Sexual dysfunction concerns
- Tips to keep sexually healthy
- Contraception options for women with MS
- What a significant other might expect from having a partner with MS (physically, sexually, emotionally, etc.)
- How to talk about an MS diagnosis with family, friends and children
- Importance of being able to ask for help/developing a support network
- Importance of open dialogue with all healthcare providers
- Resources to learn more (see recommendations at end of guide)

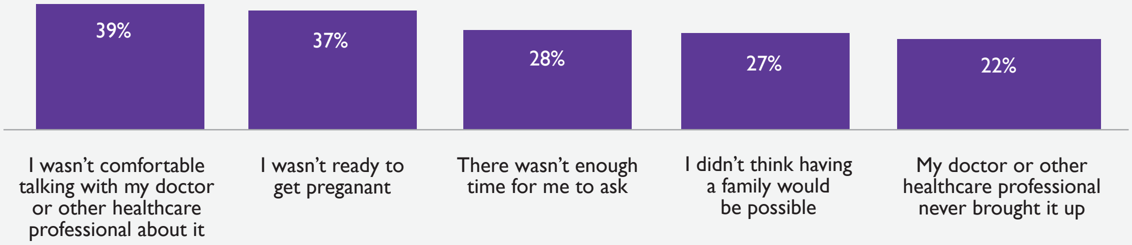
Women Newly Diagnosed with MS Have Significant Family Planning Concerns

- According to the survey, having a family is important to 94% of women diagnosed with MS, but 69% expressed concern at diagnosis that they would not be able to have children. Yet, women with MS are just as likely to conceive as those without MS.[1] Of those with concerns, 59% didn't speak with their neurologist about it and 51% didn't speak to their primary care physician.
- The top family planning concern among newly diagnosed women was the possibility of passing it on to their children (59%). However, children of a parent with MS only have a 4 percent risk of developing the condition themselves, the same rate as the frequency of birth defects in the population.[1] Other top family planning concerns were: ability to care for their children (58%), ability to have a healthy pregnancy (50%) and ability to conceive (48%).

What Women with MS Wish They Had Asked Their HCPs about at Diagnosis



Why Women with MS Had Not Spoken to Their HCPs about Family Planning



Family Planning: Conversation Starters

- Concerns surrounding stages of family planning (conception, pregnancy, labor and delivery, post-partum/breastfeeding)
- What to consider before trying to conceive, and when trying to conceive
- How MS might impact the different trimesters of pregnancy
- Tips for staying emotionally and physically healthy during pregnancy
- Type of symptoms during pregnancy that might be MS-related and/or which might require attention by a healthcare provider
- Best delivery options for women with MS
- Breastfeeding preferences/options/ability

Healthcare professionals, you can direct your patients to mscando.org/womenandms to access more information and downloadable resources, including tips, a reading list and questions to ask during appointments with their healthcare team.

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1. M. Lee, P. O'Brien, Pregnancy and Multiple Sclerosis. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 2008;79:1308–1311.