

Debunking the myths about multiple sclerosis


We surveyed 7,000 people in seven countries to find out what they know about multiple sclerosis (MS). Our survey identified several surprising misconceptions.

Oct 06, 2015

About 2.3 million people around the globe are living with multiple sclerosis (MS), a debilitating disease characterized by damage to the central nervous system.

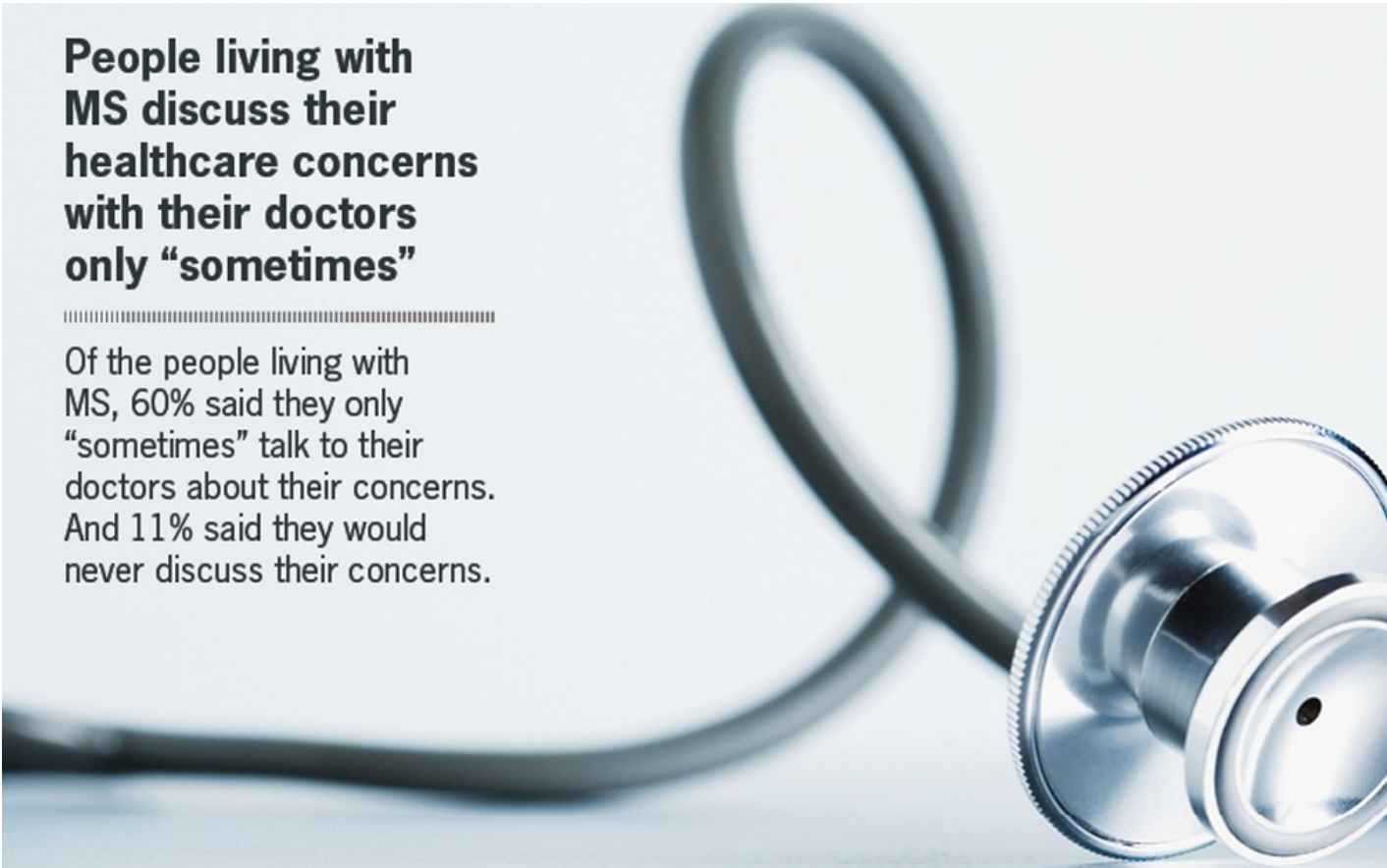
Over the last decade, our collective understanding of the disease – which impacts the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves – has improved greatly. But results from a recent survey of 7,000 people across seven countries, including nearly 600 people living with MS, show that we still have a long way to go.

Part of our ongoing efforts to raise awareness about MS, the survey focused on finding out what people actually know about the disease. Here are five findings from our survey that might surprise you.




Nearly half of the general population think MS affects men and women equally

Almost half the general population (49%) thought MS affects men and women at the same rate. In reality, women are twice as likely to develop MS, and 63% of the people living with MS in our survey were women.




People living with MS discuss their healthcare concerns with their doctors only “sometimes”

Of the people living with MS, 60% said they only “sometimes” talk to their doctors about their concerns. And 11% said they would never discuss their concerns.




Just over a third of the general population connect feeling tired with MS

Only 37% of the general population thought of fatigue as an MS symptom, while 63% of people living with the disease reported feeling fatigued because of MS.



More than half of the general population think people living with MS will eventually have to use a wheelchair

Only 17% of people living with MS actually used wheelchairs, even though 52% of the general population associated MS with wheelchair use.



Very few people associate MS with cognitive problems

Only 16% of the general population associated cognitive problems such as memory loss with MS, but studies show that up to 65% of people living with MS are likely to have them.

Source URL: <https://prod1.novartis.com/stories/debunking-myths-about-multiple-sclerosis>

List of links present in page

1. <https://prod1.novartis.com/stories/debunking-myths-about-multiple-sclerosis>
2. <https://prod1.novartis.com/tags/category/patient-perspectives>