

MSA. Multiple System Atrophy

NIHR BioResource – Rare Diseases study project

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Summary

Multiple system atrophy (MSA) is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by a combination of symptoms that affect both the autonomic nervous system (the part of the nervous system that controls involuntary action such as blood pressure or digestion) and movement.



Prof. Nick Wood, MSA project Lead

The symptoms reflect the progressive loss of function and death of different types of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms of autonomic failure that may be seen in MSA include fainting spells and problems with heart rate, erectile dysfunction, and bladder control. Motor impairments (loss of or limited muscle control or movement, or limited mobility) may include tremor, rigidity, and/or loss of muscle coordination as well as difficulties with speech and gait (the way a person walks). Some of these features are similar to those seen in Parkinson's disease, and early in the disease course it often may be difficult to distinguish these disorders.

Recruitment Criteria

Inclusion

Patients with a clinical diagnosis of possible/probable Multiple System Atrophy under secondary medical care in the UK.

Exclusion

None.