

Stationery - Research in Action

Subject line: Research in Action Newsletter – April 2024

ADD IN BELOW HEADER: April 2024 – Our latest research news and updates

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Spotlight

Thank you to Professor Paul Matthews

We would like to thank Professor Paul Matthews for his years of service on the [Medical Advisory Committee](#). Professor Matthews has provided his invaluable input and perspectives on strategic approaches to research here at MS Canada.



Professor Paul Matthews trained as a clinician scientist at the University of Oxford, UK and Stanford University, USA, and has pioneered applications of groundbreaking clinical imaging technologies. He founded two internationally leading research imaging centres, the University of Oxford Centre for Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Brain, and GlaxoSmithKline's Clinical Imaging Centre, to accelerate drug development and translation in the clinic. We congratulate Professor Matthews

as he takes on a new role as Institute Director for the [Rosalind Franklin Institute](#) (England).

[Professor Paul Matthews standing with arms crossed, smiling in front of a yellow sign reading Rosalind Franklin Institute]

MS Canada 2024-2025 Funding Announcements

MS Canada is pleased to announce the funding decisions for 2024-2025 Annual Research Competition!

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What is the latest in research?

Ancient DNA Suggests Origins of Genes that Increase MS Risk

An international team of researchers analyzed ancient genetic material (DNA) from skeletal remains of humans, who lived across Europe over thousands of years ago. They wanted to determine if there are ancestral links to genes that increase MS risk, and found that genetic changes associated with MS

were first introduced to northern Europe about 5,000 years ago by migrating animal herders. These genetic changes were related to immune system function and may have provided protection against infections or pathogens, but over time they started to contribute to the autoimmune response seen in MS. These findings are very interesting, however more work is needed to understand the causes and triggers of MS in all individuals living with the disease.

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Testing the Safety of Stem Cells to Treat Progressive MS

An international research team conducted a study to assess the safety of using human neural stem cells for treating secondary progressive multiple sclerosis (SPMS) in a [phase I clinical trial](#). In this first-in-human study, they found the treatment approach to be safe and tolerable with no reported negative side effects. They also found that the participants' disease stabilized, with no significant changes in clinical disability and cognitive function in the 12-month follow-up period. There's a lot of interest around using stem cells in the treatment of MS, and while these results are encouraging, larger clinical trials are needed to better understand the treatment effect in people with MS.

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<https://mscanada.ca/ms-research/latest-research/mental-health-ms-prodrome-0>

Emerging Research from the 2024 ACTRIMS Conference

We are excited to share some emerging research from the 9th annual Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ACTRIMS) Forum. The meeting took place on February 29th - March 2nd in sunny West Palm Beach, Florida – bringing together researchers, trainees, healthcare professionals, and others to discuss exciting advances in the science and treatment of MS and related disorders.

This year's meeting focused on "*Breaking Barriers in MS*" and included discussions on advancing treatment and care, promoting repair and remyelination, targeting compartmentalized inflammation, and much more!

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Stay on top of our latest Research Updates!!

How to get involved and make a difference?

MS Walk: May 26, 2024

Join us this May as tens of thousands of Canadians will walk together to show that no person living with multiple sclerosis is alone. Fundraise to make lives better for people living with MS. Register for MS Walk today as we walk toward a world free of MS.

[\[REGISTER HERE\]](#)

MS Bike

Experience cycling event excellence at MS Bike as we support you through every kilometre you ride in support of Canadians affected by MS. With training opportunities available as soon as you register, food and drinks when you start, finish and along the way, and roadside support, you are fully looked after.

[\[REGISTER HERE\]](#)

Would you like to learn about the latest in MS from the experts?

WEBINAR: Hear From the Experts: Employment and MS

[MS Hear From The Experts](#) is a series of webinars that aim to help people better understand MS, highlight MS-related resources, and provide tools and tips to navigate their MS journey with more knowledge and confidence.

On March 5th, we held a session on **Employment and MS: Practical Tools for Support and Accommodation Planning**. This webinar highlights the practical tools that have been developed to support employees and employers living with episodic disabilities. MS Canada has been working with the Accommodating and Communication About Episodic Disabilities partnership, which has led to the development of the Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool for workers and organizations. Our goal is to create awareness of these tools within our MS community.

**Please note that this webinar is currently only available in English.*

[\[WATCH HERE\]](#)

WEBINAR: New Treatments for Progressive MS

If you missed the latest live-stream from the [International Progressive MS Alliance](#), don't worry you can catch up now!

New, effective treatments are urgently needed for people with progressive MS. Hear from leading MS experts about the current state of treatments for progressive MS, active clinical trials that may provide new solutions, and research efforts to develop breakthrough treatments to ultimately end MS progression.

**Please note that this webcast is in English, but French subtitles are available.*

[\[WATCH HERE\]](#)

Interested in Participating in Research?

What does MS rehabilitation look like in Canada? A research team at Queen's University is seeking participants for a study that aims to understand what "usual" MS rehabilitation looks like in Canada. This study will develop an approach to describe what kind of MS rehabilitation is usually provided in hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, home care, and return-to-work services.

Are you eligible to participate? If you have MS, are over the age of 18, and received rehabilitation services in Canada in the past 3 months, your participation can help provide insight into what steps must be taken to advance rehabilitative care nationwide.

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Learn more about clinical trials and how to participate. Search clinical trials across Canada using: [Clinical Trials Ontario](#) (includes trials across Canada) or [Clinical Trials Quebec](#) to find clinical trials in your area.

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