

Stationery - Research in Action

Subject line: Research in Action Newsletter – May 2026

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Our latest research news and updates

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Research Spotlight

Welcome to MS Canada, Dr. Jennie Z. Young!



It's our pleasure to announce that Dr. Jennie Z. Young has joined MS Canada as Vice-President, Research & Scientific Engagement.

Jennie brings extensive experience in building and leading large-scale, cross-sector research initiatives. After her PhD, she spent more than a decade at MIT within the Picower Institute for Learning and Memory, working with a Nobel laureate and the Institute Director in strategic research roles. Just prior to joining us, she was the Executive Director of the Canadian Brain Research Strategy, where she led the development of Canada's first national brain research strategy. She also previously led the Science and Programs team at Brain Canada, overseeing partnerships and a major national research portfolio.

[A headshot of Dr. Jennie Z. Young]

Drawing on a career that bridges world-class neuroscience research and national research strategy, Jennie will help advance our leadership in accelerating discoveries and improving the lives of people affected by MS.

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What's the Latest in Research?

New Study Targets Harmful Autoantibodies for the Treatment of MS

[Dr. Luc Vallières](#) (Laval University) and his team led the development of a promising new drug designed to block harmful [autoantibodies](#) and potentially recover from the damage seen in MS.

This research highlights a promising new strategy for targeting and eliminating harmful autoantibodies in MS. Further development and testing are required, but if successful, this approach could provide renewed hope for improving function and quality of life for people living with MS and related disorders.

Check out [this video](#) to learn more about the research.

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Research Highlights from ACTRIMS 2026



[ACTRIMS logo signage at the conference]

Each year, the Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis ([ACTRIMS](#)), brings together experts across the world to share the latest discoveries in MS. The meeting highlights research advances that are shaping our understanding of the disease and improving care for people affected by MS.

We covered some of the research updates from ACTRIMS, including updates on aging and MS, new ways to target the disease, advances in technology, how Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) affects MS, and much more!

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Funding Decisions – MS Canada 2026-2027 Annual Research Competition

We're excited to share the funding decisions for the 2026-2027 Research Competition! We'd like to thank all applicants who submitted an application and congratulate the researchers and trainees who've been awarded funding.

By supporting researchers and trainees across the MS field, we're helping develop global leaders and the next generation of experts in MS research, empowering them to drive meaningful, groundbreaking progress for people affected by MS.

To view the funding decisions, take a look at our [Funding Announcements](#) page.

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Drs. Lara Pilutti & Sarah Donkers Receive Well-Being Award



[The International Progressive MS Alliance](#) has awarded €6.9 million to three global studies, including a Canadian study, as part of the [Well-Being Phase II Awards](#). These awards aim to find solutions for symptoms experienced by people living with progressive MS, including fatigue, cognitive impairment, pain and mobility.

[Images of Drs. Pilutti and Donkers smiling]

Can Priming Enhance Rehabilitation Success in Progressive MS?

Drs. [Lara Pilutti](#) and [Sarah Donkers](#) are co-leading the Can-PRIME MS Trial – a Canadian study that will test whether priming the brain using transcranial direct current stimulation (non-invasive brain stimulation method using a very low electrical current applied to the scalp to influence brain activity), aerobic exercise, or a combination of both, before task-specific training for cognitive and mobility skills, can improve outcomes.

Findings from the study will inform which combination of priming and rehabilitation provides the best functional improvements in mobility and cognition for people living with progressive MS.

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Save the Date: MSToronto2026 Patient Community Day on October 23, 2026

The [MSToronto2026 10th Joint ACTRIMS-ECTRIMS](#) meeting will host a Patient Community Day on October 23, 2026. Patient Community Day aims to connect people affected by MS and related neurological conditions with up-to-date scientific information and expert knowledge.

In-person and virtual registration for Patient Community Day 2026 will open in June. *MSToronto2026* will be held at the Metro Toronto Convention Center from October 21 – 23, 2026.

Check out the recording of the [Patient Community Day 2025](#) held at the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) in Barcelona, Spain.

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Explore Our MS Resources

Women's Health and MS



[A group of women smiling]

Women are up to three times more likely to get MS than men and are typically diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40 years. The impact of MS on each person varies greatly, and there are certain health aspects that affect women and men differently.

Learn more about common health considerations that women living with MS may experience, along with useful tips for managing these challenges.

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Want to Learn About the Latest in MS From the Experts?

[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. Check out our most recent webinars:

[Health & Wellness of Men with MS](#) with Bonnie Blain, RN and Dr. Manu Rangachari.

[Enhancing Wellness in MS Caregivers](#) with Drs. Marcia Finlayson and Afolasade Fakolade.

[Advances in Field of MS](#) with Dr. Mark Freedman

[\[WATCH MORE\]](#)

Interested in Participating in Research?

Toronto-Based Balance Training Study

Drs. Kei Masani and Shirin Tajali at the University Health Network are seeking participants for a study we're supporting on balance training. They're examining whether different types of non-invasive electrical stimulation combined with balance training can help improve balance and walking in people with MS.

Are you eligible to participate? This study is open to adults with MS who are aged 18-65 years old, experience balance or walking difficulties and can stand and take a few steps (with or without a mobility aid). This study is taking place at the Lyndhurst Center, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute in Toronto, Ontario.

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Diversity and Outcomes of People with MS

Dr. Ruth Ann Marrie, from Dalhousie University, is looking to connect with people with MS from diverse backgrounds via phone interviews to understand how genes, diversity traits, and life experiences affect their overall health and well-being. The study's long-term goal is to improve health in people with MS who have not been included in past research. Check out this [video](#) to learn more about the study.

Are you eligible to participate? You can participate if you have MS, are aged 18 years or older, are able to do phone interviews in English, live in Canada *and* identify as a member of any group that has been under-represented in research. Participants will also be asked to provide saliva sample by mail.

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Get Involved and Make a Difference

Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world. We're biking to change that. Be part of something big! Join a community of thousands of cyclists who are making a difference in the fight to end MS.

With one- and two-day bike tours ranging from 40 to 200 kilometres, MS Bike welcomes cyclists of all levels to challenge themselves for a greater cause. All you need is a bike, a helmet, and the resolve to keep pedaling! Click [here](#) to find an MS Bike location near you, join virtually, or participate in the Canada-wide event.



[MS Bike logo]

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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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Stay up to Date on MS Research

We're committed to sharing information and resources that are accurate, current, and accessible in different ways to people living with MS, their caregivers, family and friends. Learn more about MS research and stay informed on recent advances by checking out the [research resources](#) we offer across our website!

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Did you miss a previous edition of the Research in Action Newsletter? Check out MS Canada's [Research Library](#).

If you have any questions, or would like to unsubscribe, please contact us via email at msresearchgrants@mscanada.ca.
