

# Shining a light on MS learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic



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## Pandemic effects on health

### Impact of COVID-19 restrictions on people with MS

General functioning  
-50%



Physical functioning  
-60%



Psychological functioning  
-130%



Results of survey at MS Center Melsbroek, Belgium, 2020 (N = 132)

## Strategies to help MS management

### Professor Havrdová's recommendations

- Get vaccinated
- Follow local anti-epidemic guidelines
- Discuss your treatment with experts
- Follow a brain-healthy lifestyle (see ideas at [MS Brain Health](#))

### Top tips for virtual appointments

- Use good, visual self-monitoring tools, such as an app to monitor step count
- Medication trackers are really useful
- A symptom diary is a great help
- Before your meeting, make a list of all the topics to discuss
- Put your 'sensitive' issue at the top if it's the most important!

Also see [Dr Aaron Boster's YouTube channel](#)

## Healthcare in the future

### Face-to-face interactions

- Physical examination
- Non-verbal clues
- Difficult conversations



### e-health tools

- Education
- Monitoring
- Self-management

### 'Hybrid' model of care

- The best of face-to-face and e-health resources
- Co-created by people with MS and health teams

## Telemedicine

### Benefits

Easy  
Convenient  
Flexible  
No travel

### Challenges

Isolation  
Data security  
Poor communication  
Hidden symptoms



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"Like many things in MS, one size does not fit all" - Aaron Boster, USA

## Recommended resources

"It's really important to know where to get the latest research about Covid-19 and MS" - Trishna Bharadia, UK

### Blogs, apps and publications

[Prof Giovannoni's MS-Selfie Newsletter](#)  
[Aaron Boster MD](#)  
[MS Healthline app](#)  
[Emilyn: My MS Companion app](#)  
[Tripping On Air](#)  
[Brain health: a guide for people with MS](#)

### Self-monitoring tools

[EDSS calculator for assessing disability of patients with MS](#)  
[9-hole peg test \(9-HPT\)](#)  
[Timed 25-foot walk](#)

### MS societies

[MS International Federation](#)  
[European MS Platform](#)  
[National MS Society](#)

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