



Tell me about MS (for parents)

One of the biggest challenges for parents with Multiple Sclerosis is to help their children to understand MS appropriately, being such variable and unpredictable illness.

Children are often wondering what's happening and they reach their own conclusions. But many of the symptoms of MS are "invisible" to them; for that reason sometimes they find difficult to understand why their mum or dad can feel so different from one day to the next or from one week to another, although apparently they look the same.

Although one of you has MS, you can continue being sensational parents.

"Tell me about MS" can help you explaining MS to your children and to show them some guidelines to manage situations or emotions that may appear when living with MS.

Together with your children, we invite you to approach the two versions of this publication, and to comment those questions that may arise.



**FEDERACIÓN ESPAÑOLA
PARA LA LUCHA CONTRA LA
ESCLEROSIS MÚLTIPLE**

Federación Española para la Lucha contra la Esclerosis Múltiple
© Editor: Federación Española para la Lucha contra la Esclerosis Múltiple, 2006
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Design: Turner Broadcasting System Spain SL

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- Mum and dad: although you don't realise it, I know something is happening.
- When I don't understand the situation, I may think that it is my fault, that you don't get on well or other mistaken ideas.
- I need you to calm me explaining what MS is.
- Be honest, realistic and positive in your explanation.
- When you don't know something, don't be afraid to say "I don't know." Although I am small, I will understand it.
- Dad, mum, remember that I am a child. Explain things with examples that I can understand. If I am small, give me tales to read, let me draw, tell me stories. If I am bigger, you can give me more information and details. If I am a teenager, I can even look for information for you and talk about it with you.
- Don't leave me alone with the information, I need to talk about it with you.
- Understand that I will sometimes feel bad and I will need you to listen to me. Don't avoid talking about MS with me just because I'm small.
- **Encourage me to speak and to express my feelings as soon as possible, don't wait until I ask you. Listen to me when I talk to you.**
- I need you both. To know that I can count on you makes me feel confident. Let me know that you are there for me when I need you.
- I trust you to help me in this new situation.
- If MS doesn't allow me to enjoy some activities with you, give me alternatives so that I can carry out them with family, friends, neighbors.
- I still need rules and limits. I have to learn how to live with this situation.
- Try to make as few changes as possible in my life. It is important for me to maintain my schedule, my friends and my hobbies.
- If you need my help to carry out some task, ask me, but remember that there are things that I cannot do and some that I won't be able to do as well as you. Thank me for the things I do, it will comfort me.
- Do not ignore me. Help me to grow.
- Encourage me so that I can get used to this new situation. Introduce changes little by little. Remember that children have a great capacity to adapt.
- Dad, mum, remember that when something is difficult for you, you can learn from other parents in the same situation as you or consult with professionals specialized in MS.

. Although one of you has EM, you can continue being sensational parents.



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