

BroadcastMed | Advancements in Multiple Sclerosis Research Hold Promise for Patients

DEAN WINGERCHUK: Greetings from Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona. My name is Dean Wingerchuk. I'm a professor of neurology at Mayo Clinic. And it's my pleasure today to direct you to a review article that my colleague, Dr. Jonathan Carter, and I published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings, February 2014 edition.

This article is entitled "Multiple Sclerosis: Current and Emerging Disease-Modifying Therapies and Therapeutic Strategies." And it's meant to be a review article for neurologists, but also for any type of care provider who encounters people with multiple sclerosis, reviewing current and upcoming therapies and the way we use those therapies in practice.

The advances in understanding the course of multiple sclerosis, and the science behind relapses and progression, have led to the rapid development of new medications for the disease over the past two decades. Especially since 2010, where we've seen the emergence of three new oral therapies for multiple sclerosis, something that patients have desired for a long time. Furthermore, there's a number of new oral medications in the pipeline.

MS is the second most common disabling disease in young adults in the world. And it is a lifelong disease with a unpredictable clinical course, for the most part. That means that young people are faced with challenges in making decisions for use of medications that have potential toxicities, both short term and long term. And this is important because not only the patients, but the physicians that see them, have to be aware of the potential side effects and toxicities, monitoring requirements in order to make appropriate decisions going forward.

The future looks very bright for multiple sclerosis therapeutics. Over the last 20 years, we now have 10 approved therapies for MS. And there's many more in the pipeline, including an increased focus on the unmet needs of secondary progressive and primary progressive multiple sclerosis. And very excitingly, therapies for repair and remyelination in the nervous system.

In the article, we also touch on therapeutic strategies. So we look forward to using combinations of therapies and ultimately towards a cure. Before that, we think we'll be able to tailor therapy in an individual way by using biomarkers and matching a patient's type of multiple sclerosis with an appropriate therapy. So we hope you enjoy the article and find it useful in your practice.