

## Use Of 6-Min Test For Assessing Walking Impairment For Patients With Multiple Sclerosis As Treatment Option

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**ABSTRACT**

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic disease of the central nervous system in which nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord are damaged that leads in the progression of physical disability over time. Walking impairment is a leading feature of MS and a sentinel characteristic of the later or advanced stages of the disease. This paper presents a conceptual rationale along with empirical evidence for exercise training as a rehabilitation approach for managing walking impairment and improving walking function in persons with MS. Conceptually, MS is associated with a decrease in physical activity, which, in turn, can result in deconditioning across multiple domains of physiological functioning. The resulting deconditioning feeds back and further drives physical inactivity until a threshold is reached that likely initiates the progression of walking impairment in MS. Empirically, physical activity and exercise training have been associated with beneficial effects on walking function in persons with MS. This is based on cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental research that included diversity in the breadth of measures of walking, persons with MS, and exercise/ physical activity characteristics. Of particular importance, early identification of the 6 minutes test considers the walking impairment future researchers might consider examining the combinatory effects of exercise training plus pharmacological agents on walking mobility in MS.

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