

# When to tell Your Employer that You have Multiple Sclerosis

*Shabi Guptha*

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Deciding when to tell your employer of your MS diagnosis is easily as important as deciding when to tell your family. Under ADA rules you do not have to disclose an illness unless it causes a significant challenge in the workplace, or if you are requesting accommodations such as specific equipment or altered work times.

However, multiple sclerosis is unpredictable and while you may be fine today, it is possible for a new symptom to start while you're at work. The best time to inform your employer of the diagnosis may be when you are symptom-free. Arm yourself with information about your illness so that you can reassure your employer and provide needed information.

Explain to your employer the unpredictable nature of multiple sclerosis. If you have been working with your company for a long time, then you may be able to reference a past flare-up in the workplace. For example, Do You Remember a Year Ago when I used a cane because my leg was numb? That was an MS flare-up. Consider making a plan with your employer to deal with flare-ups in the workplace.

By using examples you can show your employer that even though you have MS you will still be a productive member of the work team.

Some employers will allow you to use flex time, or even work from your home office part of the time it necessary during a flare up. If you have problems with spasticity in your arms consider using voice recognition software if you use your computer a lot.

You find yourself these using mobility aids such as a cane or wheelchair at work you may find that you need to rearrange your workspace. Making room for these devices will make your job easier and allow you to be more productive.

Many people are concerned that if they tell their employer about their MS diagnosis they will be discriminated against, were treated differently by their employer or coworkers. While sometimes as does occur, in the majority of cases you will find those you work with to be helpful in understanding. If you are honest and upfront you should have no problem.