

EXPLORING MS

**An activity book
about multiple sclerosis**



This book belongs to:

What is MS?



MS is a condition that affects the brain and spinal cord.

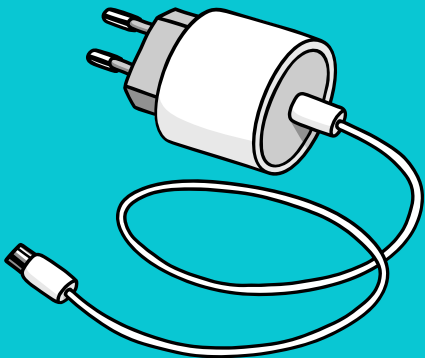
Our brains send messages to different parts of our bodies so fast we don't even realise it's happening.

These messages tell our bodies to do things like move our fingers and toes.

Our brains also get messages from our bodies. For example, if we touch something hot, our body tells our brain, and then our brain tells us to move away.



The nerves (neurons) that these messages travel along have a protective outer coating called myelin. You can think of myelin like the outside covering of a phone charger - it protects what's inside.



In MS, the body's defence system accidentally attacks the myelin. This makes it harder for the messages to get where they need to go.

There are lots of different symptoms of MS. Each person who has MS experiences it in their own way.

There is no cure for MS but different treatments and supports are available to help people manage the condition and to live well.



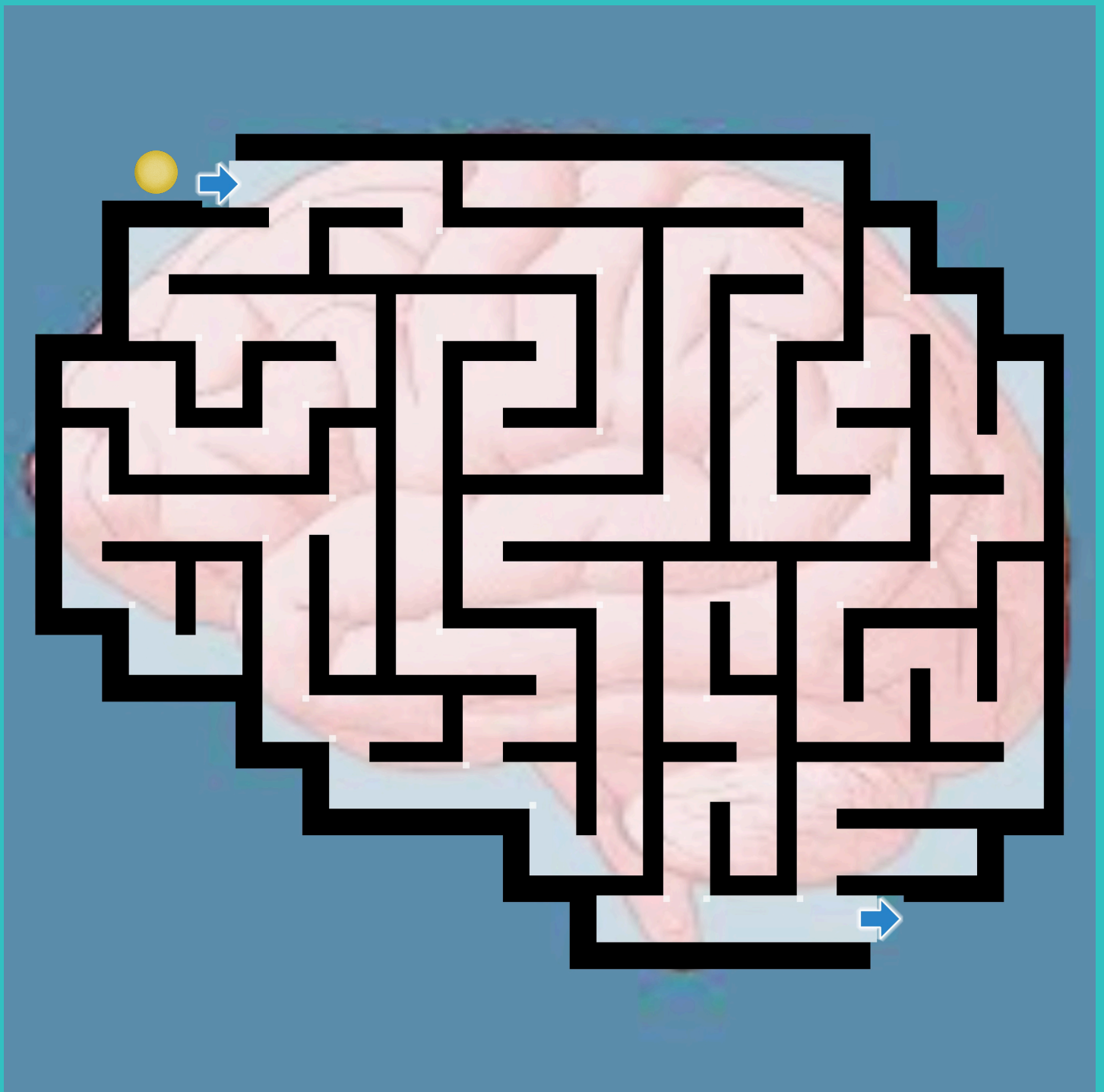
Draw what you think MS
looks like



Guide the message

through the brain

MS can stop or delay messages travelling through the brain. Help the message ● find it's way through the brain.



I can't find the word

I'm searching for...

See how many of these words you can find in the word search

Axon
Community
Myelin

Balance
Doctor
Nerves

Brain
Health
Tiredness

Care
Muscles
Vision

O W L E R A C T A D V F M E E
H T O C M Y E L I N D I C R N
N I A R B S V O I E D N L A V
B M U S C L E S U C A N E P A
R T S E O M U Y R L L T A E X
R Y N A X O N P A A V O I H R
R O T C O D T B A M E S I C D
N L E I V I S I O N M R S O D
L U E G N E N H E A L T H D A
C Y U O V U D L I R A G M T E
O A I R L C M E W H A B C I S
O R E E D L T M S R E I M A N
R N C L S I A R O T W E S A N
U K R O T I E B U C O N L A Y
P S S E N D E R I T T G E R I

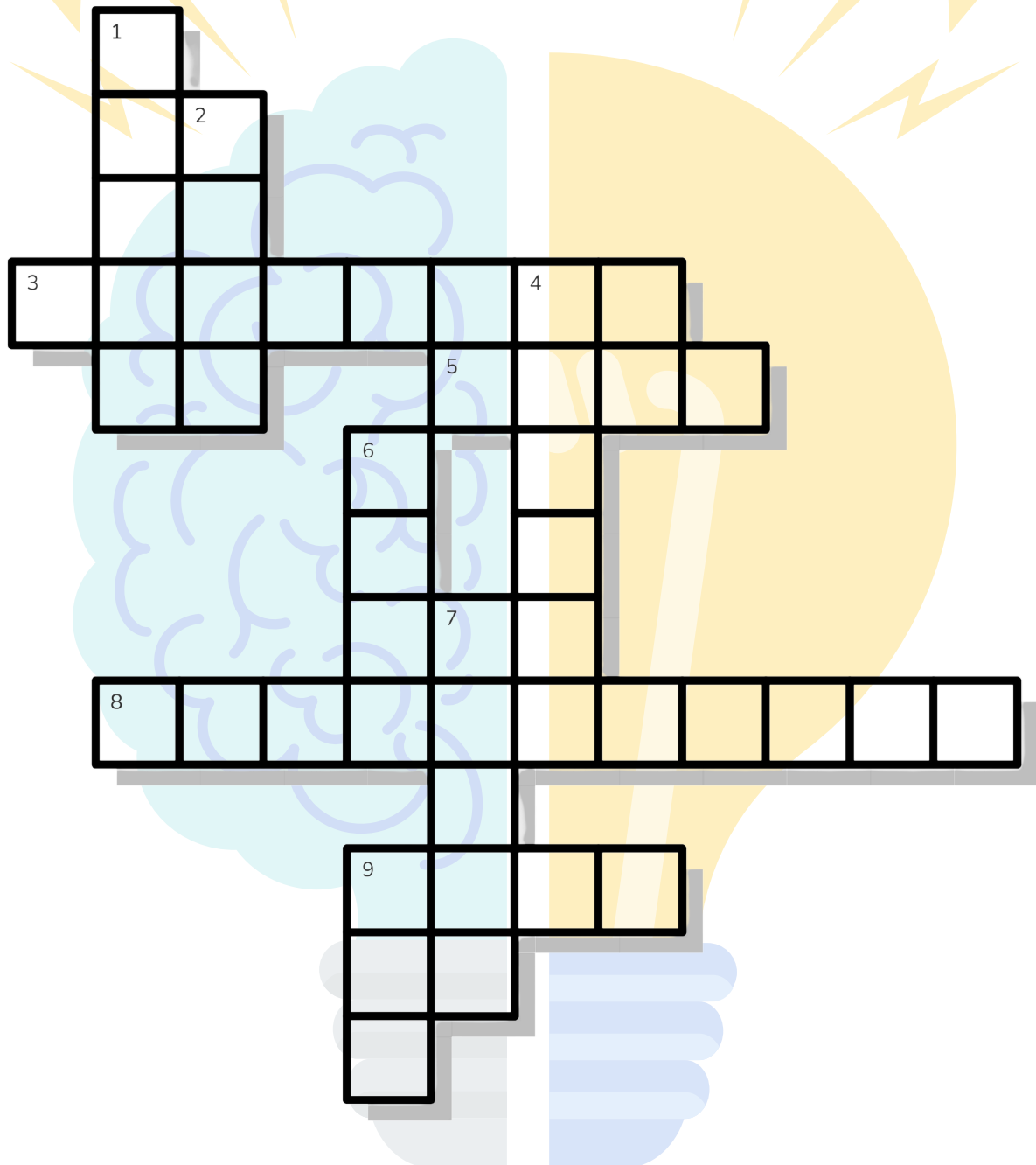
What's that word again?

Across

- 3. Something you take when you're sick to feel better.
- 5. A check-up to see if you're okay
- 8. Where you sit before seeing the doctor
- 9. What you do for someone in need

Down

- 1. What you do at night.
- 2. All of you from head to toe
- 4. A special cell in your brain
- 6. Taking a break to feel better
- 7. Feeling when you need sleep
- 9. A squeeze to show you care.



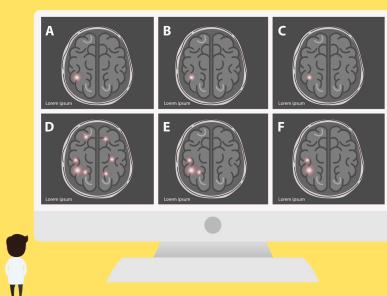
Spot the Difference

When people who have MS visit the hospital for tests, special pictures of their brain are taken using a big machine called an MRI.

These pictures help doctors see what's going on inside the brain!

The person who takes these pictures is called a radiographer.

They take the pictures and look at them closely.



Sometimes, they compare old and new pictures to see if anything has changed.

You can pretend to be a radiographer too!

See if you can find any differences in the pictures below.



How many did you find?

Match that symptom

Symptoms of MS can be different for each person living with it. How long the symptom lasts and how much it affects a person can be different too. On the left, you will see some of the symptoms of MS. Try match the symptom to the correct description on the right.



Fatigue

Having trouble seeing things clearly, like things look blurry or you see double.

Pins and needles

When your body feels tight and it's hard to move your muscles.

Numbness

When your hands or other parts of your body shake without you trying to make them.

Vision issues

Feeling wobbly and having a hard time standing or walking without falling.

Loss of balance

It feels like tiny bugs are crawling or poking you on your skin.

Stiffness

Feeling really, really tired even if you had enough sleep.

Tremor

When a part of your body feels like it's asleep and you can't feel it properly.

Mum and Gráinne

Gráinne was very worried. Her mum had been in the hospital for three days now. Since the day before her mum went in, she had heard adults in her family whispering on the phone and closing the door for private 'grown up' conversations. She felt that something was wrong. When she finally got to see her mum, she felt a big wave of relief.

Gráinne's mum gave her a warm hug and said, "I have something to tell you, sweetie. The doctors found out I have something called MS. It stands for Multiple Sclerosis."

Gráinne looked at her mum with wide eyes. "What does that mean?" Her mum smiled gently. "It means that sometimes, my body doesn't work the way we might expect. That's why I have been feeling tired and my fingers have felt numb. But now that we know what it is, we can get the right help."

Gráinne had lots of questions. "Will I catch MS from you?" Her mum shook her head. "No, darling, you can't catch MS from me. It's something my body has, but it doesn't spread to other people."

"Why can't the doctors just get rid of your MS?" Gráinne asked. "MS is something that stays with me," her mum explained. "But the doctors and nurses will help me manage it. There are treatments that can make me feel better and help me live a normal life."



"Will you get better?" Gráinne asked.

"I will have good days and sometimes I might have some not-so-good days," her mum explained. "But the doctors and nurses will help me, and I have you and the rest of our family to help too. We can still have fun and do lots of things together."

Gráinne hugged her mum tightly. "I love you, Mum."

Her mum kissed the top of her head. "I love you too, darling".

From then on, Saoirse and her mum enjoyed their time together even more. They played games, read stories, and laughed a lot. Even on the not-so-good days, they knew they had each other, and that made everything feel a little bit easier.



- **How do you think Gráinne felt when she heard her family whispering on the phone?**
- **What do you think Gráinne felt when she finally got to see her mum after she was in the hospital?**
- **What important questions do you think families would have if someone they love is diagnosed with MS?**
- **How did Gráinne's mum help her understand MS?**
- **Gráinne and her mum decided to have fun and do lots of things together. List 3 fun things you like to do with your family.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



QUIZ TIME!!!

Let's see how much you know about MS!

Circle the correct answer for each question.

1 What does MS stand for?

- a) Muscle Strength
- b) Multiple Sclerosis
- c) Mega Speed

2 What part of the body does MS affect most?

- a) The stomach
- b) The brain and spinal cord
- c) The heart

3 Does everyone with MS have the same symptoms?

- a) Yes
- b) No

4 Which of these is a common symptom of MS?

- a) Feeling very tired
- b) Breathing fire
- c) Having super speed

5 Can you catch MS from another person?

- a) Yes
- b) No

6 Who can help someone with MS manage their symptoms?

- a) A teacher
- b) A doctor
- c) A chef

7 How do doctors test for MS?

- a) By looking at your teeth
- b) By doing special tests like an MRI
- c) By asking your favorite color

8 True or false: MS can be completely cured

- a) True
- b) False

9 What is the coating that surrounds nerves in the brain?

- a) Myelin
- b) Skin
- c) Muscle

10 How can children like you help people with MS?

- a) By raising money through Readathon
- b) By making them do chores
- c) By building them a spaceship

WWW.READATHON.IE