- Children have high immunological reactivity, which manifests in how MS presents and in the increased likelihood of other mimicking disorders. There is a need to differentiate MS from other neuroimmunological conditions.
- The clinical disease course of MS is different in children compared to older adults. As childhood is a period with high inflammation, a child presenting with a progressive onset warrants further investigation for alternative diagnoses.
- While children with MS tend to have longer time to reach disability compared to adults, they are still likely to reach disability milestones at earlier ages, underscoring the need for early diagnosis to allow for timely intervention with disease-modifying therapies.

Late-Onset MS Diagnosis:

- It is critical not to miss conditions that are more common in older populations, which can mimic MS, such as vascular disease, spinal stenosis/compressive myelopathy and arthritis.
- Older age is a time of reduced inflammatory activity, especially in women after estrogen levels drop with menopause. Relapses triggered by inflammation happen less frequently, but disability progression tends to accelerate, raising questions about the decreasing benefits vs. increasing risk of disease-modifying therapies, which primarily target inflammation in older individuals.
- In older populations, non-specific white matter changes in the brain are more likely due to vascular disease or migraines which can lead to misdiagnosis of MS. The appearance and location of lesions detected on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) can help differentiate white matter lesions from vascular abnormalities to

refinement of the McDonald diagnostic criteria for MS over time, misdiagnosis remains an important issue. We expect these guidelines for MS differential diagnosis in various populations will promote diagnostic accuracy, says Dr. Cohen.

Dr. Solomon adds

differentiate MS from other disorders have evolved considerably over the last several decades. The work of the MS Differential Diagnosis Consortium, derived from recent data and diverse expert opinion, will aid accurate diagnosis of MS in contemporary clinical care

About ACTRIMS

Founded in 1995, Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ACTRIMS) is a community of leaders from the United States and Canada who are dedicated to