

Influence of social isolation measures due to Covid-19 on the quality of life of people with Multiple Sclerosis

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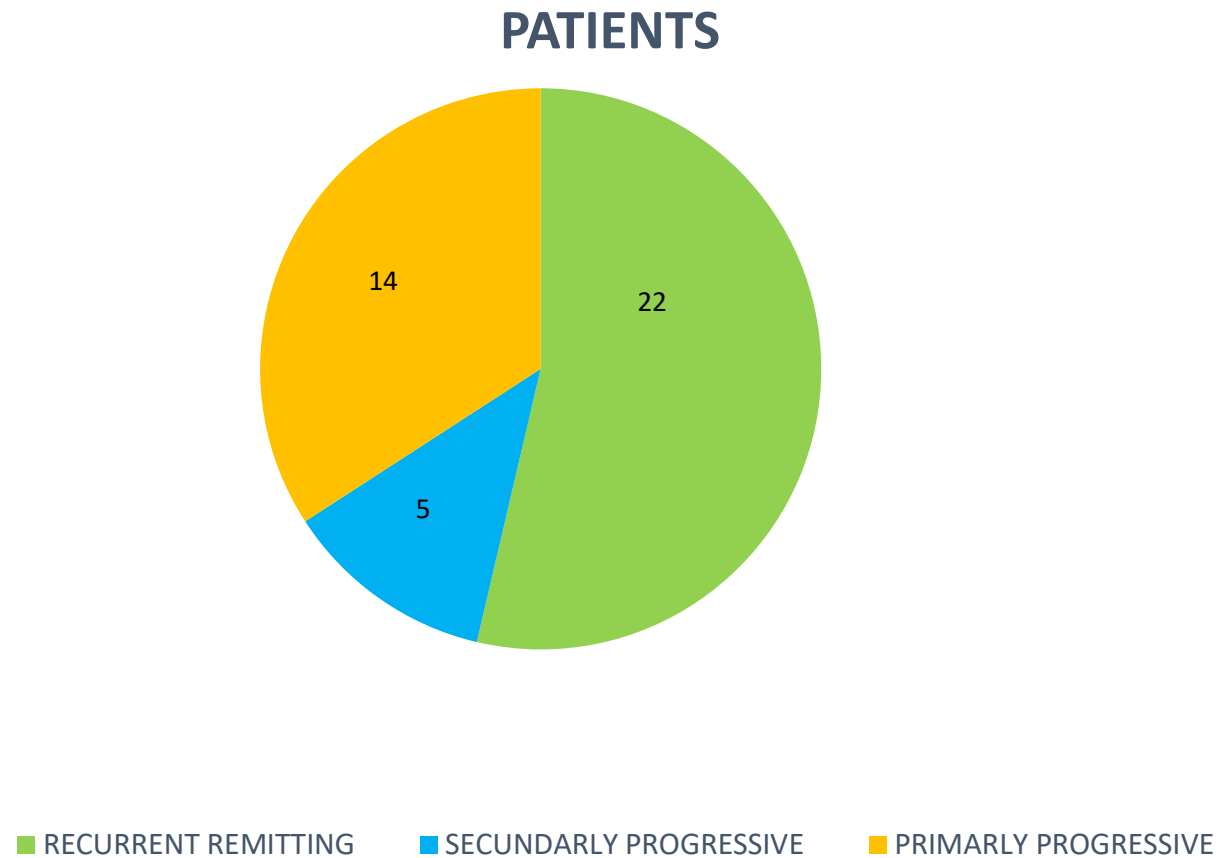
BACKGROUND

- People with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) are often treated with immunosuppressants or immunomodulators and are more susceptible to worsening in the course of COVID-19 if they get infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- Social isolation is necessary to minimize the risk of infection.

OBJECTIVE

- To analyze the influence of social isolation measures on the quality of life of people with MS during the COVID-19 pandemic period.

METHODS



- FEMALE: 25
- MALE: 16

- AGED 18 TO 70 YEARS

- EDSS: 0 TO 8.5

METHODS

- All of them answered a structured questionnaire containing 15 questions about patients perception in the physical, communicative and psychological domains during social isolation.

METHODS

- **Psychological domain:**
- Do you feel more vulnerable to COVID-19 because you are diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis compared to other people?
- Are you feeling more sad, discouraged and / or depressed than usual because of social isolation?
- Have you had more feelings of worry, fear and / or anxiety than usual because of the pandemic?
- Did social isolation negatively affect your Quality of Life?
- What else has helped you to face social isolation the most?

METHODS

- **Physical Domain**

- Do you think that social isolation has changed your daily life activities?
- Has this period of social isolation changed your fatigue?
- Do you have any difficulty walking during the period of social isolation?
- Have you been in pain during this period of social isolation?
- Are you feeling less strength in your muscles during this period of social isolation?

METHODS

- **Communicative Domain**
- Do you think that social isolation has changed your communication activities (talking to friends / relatives and people in general)?
- Has this period of social isolation changed the frequency of your communications?
- Do you have any difficulty in pronouncing the words (tiredness in speaking, impaired diction, slurred speech) during the period of social isolation?
- Have you experienced any difficulty in producing your voice (low, weak, hoarse, failed, absent voice) in this period of social isolation?
- Compare your mode of communication before and after social isolation

Results

Physical Domain:

- Changes in daily life (n = 37/90%)
- Fatigue (n = 22/54%)
- Difficulty in walking (n = 28/68%)
- Pain (n = 23/56%)
- Decreased muscle strength (n = 24/58%)

RESULTS

Communicative Domain

- Difficulty in verbal communication (n = 13/32%)
- Change in activity and communicative frequency (n = 31/76%)
- Reduced face-to-face communication and increased use of video calls by cell phone.

RESULTS

Psychological Domain

- Perception of vulnerability (n = 20/49%)
- Sadness (n = 27/66%)
- Concern / fear (n = 31/75%)
- Impact on quality of life (n = 33/80 %)
- Support of family / friends, online treatments, leisure and religiosity, helping to deal with the social isolation.

CONCLUSION

During the social isolation in Brazil, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of respondents in this cross-sectional study revealed a moderate to severe impact on quality of life in all domains. In the face of uncertainties, MS specialists must adapt to monitoring for complications in the spheres of physiotherapy, psychology and speech therapy, as well as adopt rehabilitation options applicable to the moment.