

## Prevalence, Demographics and Clinical Characteristics of Multiple Sclerosis in North of Khuzestan Province, Iran

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**Background:** Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, idiopathic and the most common inflammatory demyelinating disease of the central nervous system that progresses to severe disability. Prevalence of MS is 2 - 150 per 100,000 people. The purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence rate of MS in the northern cities of Khuzestan Province, Iran, as well as to determine the demographic characteristics. Patients and Methods: In this descriptive correlational study, patients were recruited through the MS Society as well as the neurology clinics and departments of hospitals in north cities of Khuzestan Province (Iran). Data were collected through completing a face to face questionnaire and were analyzed using SPSS version 17 and the chi-square test. P value < 0.05 was considered statistically significance. Results: Prevalence of MS was 15 per 100,000 people. Seventy-eight percent of the patients had low literacy, and 81% were unemployed. Female to male ratio was 2.08: 1 that became less in younger patients. 69% and 15% of the patients were relapsing remitting and progressive relapsing, respectively. Demographic characteristics of the patients did not show any statistically significant relationship with clinical courses and signs at onset; however, a significant correlation was seen between severe disability and sex (P = 0.001) as well as between severe disability and progressive-relapsing subtype (P = 0.02). Conclusions: The prevalence of MS showed an increasing rate of the disease in recent years. Decreasing of the female to male ratio and patients' low socio-economic level, need more studies. The increasing rate of patients with progressive relapsing feature and more disabled patients belong to this subtype show the poor prognosis.

**Keywords:** Multiple Sclerosis; Prevalence; Demography; Sex Ratio  
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