

News Release

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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Pioneers New Effort to See MS from the Inside Out

- **Company launches global art campaign for people with MS to express their invisible symptoms and the unseen impact of the disease**
- **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, to donate €1 to the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation for every social media post (up to €50,000) shared by members of the public that include the hashtags #MSInsideOut and #MyInvisibleMS**

Darmstadt, Germany, May 30, 2019 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, joins the global multiple sclerosis (MS) community in recognition of World MS Day, an initiative created by the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) to raise awareness of the 2.3 million people worldwide living with this challenging disease. In support of this year's World MS Day theme, #MyInvisibleMS, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is making MS visible through a variety of initiatives aimed at shining a light on the hidden symptoms of MS. These invisible symptoms, which include visual problems, fatigue, pain and emotional changes¹, can vary between patients and often add to the stigma and emotional burden of the disease.

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, has partnered with people living with MS and their carers to create art that visually expresses the invisible effects of MS. The company has created vibrant pop-up art galleries which will display the creations in 15 different countries. These creative efforts are aimed at educating viewers on the invisible symptoms of MS and the ways they impact quality of life. The artwork from the Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, pop-up galleries can be seen on EMDgroup.com.



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"People around us don't see our invisible symptoms, but that doesn't mean they don't exist. The artwork is just a friendly reminder to everyone that even though we don't look "sick", MS is still a chronic condition we have to deal with every day," said Stanca P., living with MS and the creator of one of the art pieces.

To support MSIF's Informed Decision-Making Programme, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, will donate €1 for every post shared (up to €50,000) in social media by members of the public including combined use of the hashtags #MSInsideOut and #MyInvisibleMS until June 8. The Informed Decision-Making Programme supports several initiatives of MS patient groups around the world. These initiatives aim to provide reliable, accessible and up-to-date information, so that people know they are making the best decision for their MS and their lives.

"Our company is deeply committed to MS and better understanding both the visible and unseen ways the disease can affect patients," said Andrew Paterson, Global Head of Neurology & Immunology at Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. "We are inspired by the patients and carers who have advanced this understanding and who made their MS symptoms visible by sharing their experience."

As part of the company's commitment to better understand MS, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, announced the documentary "Seeing MS from the Inside Out" on World MS Day last year. The documentary premiered at ECTRIMS 2018 and was recently screened at the 2019 Indy Film Fest (May 2-12) at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Newfields, USA, along with the 2019 Caorle Film Festival in Venice, Italy (May 9-11). The film was also accepted for the Beach Cities Inspirational Film Festival (2020) in California, USA. The full documentary is available [here](#).

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About Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, inflammatory condition of the central nervous system and is the most common, non-traumatic, disabling neurological disease in young adults. It is estimated that approximately 2.3 million people have MS worldwide. While symptoms can vary, the most common symptoms of MS include blurred vision, numbness or tingling in the limbs and problems with strength and coordination. The relapsing forms of MS are the most common.

About World MS Day 2019

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World MS Day is officially marked on 30 May each year. Events and campaigns take place throughout the month of May. It brings the global MS community together to share stories, raise awareness and campaign with and for everyone affected by multiple sclerosis. The 2019 campaign will be called 'My Invisible MS' (#MyInvisibleMS) and the theme is Visibility. In 2009, the MS International Federation (MSIF) and its members initiated the first World MS Day. Together we have reached hundreds of thousands of people around the world, with a campaign focusing on a different theme each year. MSIF provides a toolkit of free resources to help everyone to take part in World MS Day. Anyone can use these tools, or make their own, to create positive change in the lives of more than 2.3 million people around the world.

About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, operates across healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 52,000 employees work to make a positive difference to millions of people's lives every day by creating more joyful and sustainable ways to live. From advancing gene editing technologies and discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2018, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 14.8 billion in 66 countries.

Scientific exploration and responsible entrepreneurship have been key to the company's technological and scientific advances. This is how Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, has thrived since its founding in 1668. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed company. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, operate as EMD Serono in healthcare, MilliporeSigma in life science, and EMD Performance Materials.

ⁱ <https://www.msif.org/about-ms/symptoms-of-ms/>