

WELLNESS WITH MS

**Is possible and it is in
your hands...**



#MSBITES

Wellness with Multiple Sclerosis

Eat A Healthy Balanced Diet

A healthy diet includes a balance of nutrient dense lean proteins, healthy fats and complex carbohydrates from a variety of colorful vegetables and fruits, whole grains and beans. Limit processed and convenience foods with high sodium and added sugars. Use portion and proportion guidelines when serving meals. This pattern of eating will nourish your body and reduce your risk for comorbid health conditions.

Limit Salt, Fat And Added Sugar

Diets high in sodium have long been associated with high blood pressure. Recent research suggests that high sodium diets may also increase MS disease activity. Eliminating the salt-shaker is a good start but will not be enough to reduce your intake of salt. More than 75% of the salt in the American diet comes from processed, packaged and restaurant foods.

Move Your Body

Inactivity can result in numerous risk factors associated with heart disease, cancer, hypertension, stroke, decreased bone density and other chronic health conditions. Regular exercise helps with overall well-being, improves strength, improves bladder and bowel function, improves cognition, improves mood and outlook, helps to maintain a healthy weight and improves sleep quality. Move your body!

Be Supplement Savvy

Correcting nutrient deficiencies is important but research has not found that high doses of vitamins are beneficial to people with MS and in fact may be harmful. Getting your nutrients from food ensures that you also get beneficial fiber and phytonutrients. FYI: Supplement industry is largely self-regulated which puts the burden on the consumer to verify the quality of the product you purchase and put into your body.

Get Good Sleep

Sleep disturbance is a big contributor to fatigue and diminished cognition. A chronic lack of sleep increases risk for diabetes, obesity, heart disease and mood disorders. Alcohol, stress, inactivity, caffeine, medications and sometimes food can cause interrupted or poor quality sleep. Your healthcare team can help you investigate the cause.

Manage Stress

The relationship between stress and MS is a lot like the age-old chicken and egg question: which came first? Too much stress in life can contribute to an MS relapse or symptom aggravation. Likewise many MS symptoms can trigger stress. Therefore learning to relax and manage stress is essential but not necessarily easy. Remember, it is a learned skill and will get easier with practice.



Don't Smoke

Smoking causes serious health problems. Smokers have more lung cancer, heart disease and respiratory problems than non-smokers. Smoking is known to cause shortness of breath, susceptibility to lung infections and heartbeat irregularities which might transform a moderate neurological limitation into a severe disability in a person with MS. Smokers with weakness or incoordination present a fire hazard.

Drink In Moderation – If At All

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, moderate drinking is up to 1 drink per day for women and up to 2 drinks per day for men. People with a chronic medical condition that alcohol can aggravate (like MS) should consider avoiding alcohol. It can affect balance and coordination after just one drink. It may also have an additive effect of some common MS medications.

Maintain Healthy Weight

Having MS may mean you have become less active and have gained weight. A healthy balanced diet and exercise can help you to attain and maintain a healthy weight. Obesity is a modifiable risk factor for heart disease, cancer, hypertension, stroke, diabetes and other chronic health conditions. Research shows that people with MS and comorbid conditions experience decreased quality of life and an increase in disability.

