People with multiple sclerosis often ask their healthcare providers about wellness-focused strategies. Focus groups of people with disabilities (www.ilru.org/healthwellness/healthinfo/wellness-definition.html) identified the important elements of wellness as:

- being able to function and having opportunities to participate
- being independent and having self-determination
- having physical and emotional states of well-being; and
- not being held back by pain.

Emerging evidence about wellness and MS may help guide patient-doctor discussions.

**Diet**

Exercise


Mood


A review of the effects of stress in MS (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23537508) suggests that stress activates cytokines that lead to maturation of Th17 cells that are known to play a role in MS; the authors suggest that reducing stress may have a therapeutic effect on MS. A trial of stress management in 121 MS patients (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22786596) demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in Gd+ MRI lesions in the stress management treatment group. A recent review of mind-body medicine interventions in MS (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23227313) revealed several trials where mindfulness, yoga, biofeedback and relaxation reduced depression, anxiety and fatigue.