

MSCONNECTION

MOVING TOWARD A WORLD FREE OF MS | SUMMER 2009

Encouraging continued effort

To encourage continued effort in the movement against MS, the Delaware Chapter expanded its fundraising schedule this spring. The goal was to encourage people to continue to be pro-active, stay well-informed, and to help their family members, friends, and neighbors with MS.

“The Society is at the forefront of the MS movement,” explains the chapter’s director of development, Holly Maddams, “and we aren’t slowing down, because MS doesn’t slow down, even when the economy does. While we may be operating with a leaner budget, we will stay focused on what matters—moving closer to a world free of MS—because Delawareans with MS



Teams Sterling Stars (above) and Judgement for Believers (left) were two of the many teams who helped raise more than \$125,000 at Walk MS: Wilmington Riverfront.

and their families will continue to turn to the National MS Society—perhaps more so now than ever before—and we must do everything we can to prepare to help each one of them address the challenges that they face.”

“Our events are the rallying point for the MS movement,” adds the chapter’s event

coordinator, Jennie Welch, “and we thank everyone who participated. Even if they couldn’t raise money, being there was an important step, whether they volunteered, recruited, or participated. All these investments in time and energy will pay off both this year and in years to come. Thank you all so much!”

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PRESIDENT'S IMPRESSIONS



President of the Delaware Chapter, Kate Cowperthwait

Although he was not scheduled to stop in the First State, I was

I kept checking the Web site as Phil Keoghan, the host of CBS's *The Amazing Race*, cycled toward Delaware on May 6.

Amazing Race, cycled toward Delaware on May 6.

mesmerized by his effort. He averaged 100 miles a day for a total of 3,500 miles. He did it to raise money and awareness for MS and Bike MS. I'm grateful to Phil for putting us on the map.

I'm also grateful to all the unsung heroes who, for decades, have supported the National MS Society, the Delaware Chapter, and Bike MS as well as Walk MS and the chapter's other fundraisers.

You know who you are. You are the best cyclists, walkers, volunteers, and sponsors in the world. Even in this difficult economic climate, you are finding ways to expand your teams, energize your efforts, and reach even further.

And you are doing it for one reason: to do something about MS—now!

Thank you.

Kate

MSConnection, Summer 2009

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Mission statement

We mobilize people and resources to drive research for a cure and to address the challenges of everyone affected by MS.

The information provided by the Society is based on professional advice, published experience, and expert opinion. Information provided in response to questions does not constitute therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. The Society recommends that all questions and information be discussed with a personal physician and does not endorse products or services. Such names appear here solely because they are considered valuable information. The Society assumes no liability for the use or contents of any mentioned products or services.

Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. The Society's medical advisors recommend that people with MS talk with their health-care professionals about using these medications and the effective strategies and treatments to manage symptoms. If you or someone you know has MS, visit the Society Web site at nationalMSSociety.org, or call (800) 344-4867.

2009 Bike MS: NRG Energy Indian River Power Plant Bike to the Bay

in association with Patterson-Schwartz and Bank of America



October 3–4, 2009

The premier bicycling event in Delaware is just around the corner—and the Delaware Chapter needs your help if we are going to make the 26th anniversary ride of Bike MS: Bike to the Bay the most successful ever.

Sign up to ride!

Bike to the Bay attracted more than 1,850 bicyclists last year, who raised more than \$1 million while enjoying the experience of a lifetime. With four rides to choose from—25K, 45-mile, 75-mile, and 150-mile—participants enjoy a well-appointed afternoon or a safe and fun-filled weekend while making a difference in the lives of Delawareans with MS. For details, call (302) 655-5610. Or visit www.BikeToTheBay.org.

Join a team! Start a team!

Team captains receive info about recruiting, collecting pledges, and generating enthusiasm for the ride. And all teams are eligible for great incentives and awards. For details, contact Karen Shore at karen.shore@MSdelaware.org. Or call (302) 655-5610, ext. 26.

Donate!

Bike to the Bay supplies everything from first aid to food, so a lot of donations are needed. If you have the resources to spare, please contact Jennie Welch at jennie.welch@MSdelaware.org. Or call (302) 655-5610, ext. 15.

Volunteer!

Bike to the Bay covers 150 miles of Kent and Sussex counties over two days, so a lot of help is needed with logistics, like manning one of the rest stops (every 10 to 12 miles along the route), monitoring the route in support-and-gear vehicles, serving lunch, cleaning up, and cheering the bicyclists across the finish line. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Jenna Wagner at jenna.wagner@MSdelaware.org. Or call (302) 655-5610, ext. 29.



Cyclists in Kent & Sussex Co!

Join the Ambassador Program, and get a cool jersey! Just adopt a bike shop and a group of retail businesses that are willing to distribute Bike MS material. For details, call Jennie at (302) 655-5610.

Year-round reading program benefits everyone

Spearheading the movement to create a world free of MS by promoting reading, MS Readathon has evolved in Delaware into a year-round, statewide program that raised more than \$54,000 last year for MS research, programs, and services. Organized by the Delaware Chapter, MS Readathon continues to benefit everyone involved, including Delaware's parents, teachers, and the children who take part in the MS reading program.

For parents with children in elementary or middle school MS Readathon promotes two family values: literacy and social responsibility. Children who have taken part in the MS reading program have grown up with a life-long love of reading as well as a committed

resolve to make the world a better place for people with MS to live in. And for parents who homeschool their children, the chapter supplies the tools needed to chart each child's progress, encourage creativity around a reading theme, and to make Readathon a part of the lesson plan, all that's necessary to help a child succeed.

For Delaware's teachers MS Readathon not only supplies all the necessary tools to help a child succeed but also helps to set goals for reading in a classroom situation. Prizes awarded to top MS Readathon fundraisers provide incentive to keep reading.

For the children MS Readathon provides all the

academic and social benefits of one of the few nationally known programs that promote both reading and community involvement. The children who take part in the MS reading program are supported through every page they read and encouraged through every dollar they raise. Readathon is a win-win situation for Delaware's children.

For more information Email the MS Readathon coordinator, Jenna Wagner, at jenna.wagner@MSdelaware.org. Or call her at (302) 655-5610.



A personal invitation

As a Delaware Chapter client, you are invited to enjoy a cup of coffee with the chapter's president and program director and to discuss the types of programs you would like to see implemented at the chapter. You have a choice of dates and meeting sites. To reserve your seat, call Debra at (302) 655-5610, ext. 13, or email her at debra.veenema@MSdelaware.org.



Wednesday, June 3

- 8:00 A.M. Panera Bread, Wilmington
- 11:00 A.M. Bear Library
- 2:00 P.M. Pure Bread Deli, Newark
- 5:00 P.M. Appoquinimink Library, Middletown

Tuesday, June 9

- 11:00 A.M. Dover Library
- 3:00 P.M. Harrington Library

Thursday, June 11

- 11:00 A.M. Georgetown Easter Seals
- 2:00 P.M. Seaford Library
- 6:00 P.M. Lakeside Community Center, Long Neck

New MS programs need volunteers

Two new Delaware Chapter programs—**Helping Hands** and **Friendly Visitor**—are now offering much-needed support to Delawareans living with MS— with the help of people who are ready, willing, and able to volunteer.

Helping Hands matches volunteers with chapter clients who need help with a range of household chores. “We have a great deal of need,” says Marie Eldreth, the chapter’s program coordinator. “Many of our clients cannot clean their own closets, do their own yard work, or run their own errands because of their MS. So, the chapter created a program that places a volunteer in a client’s home to work for the day.”

Helping Hands also needs volunteers to sit and visit with chapter clients. As clients are prescreened, Helping Hands volunteers will undergo a background check and sign a confidentiality agreement.

Friendly Visitor is similar to the sit-and-visit side of Helping Hands only longer term. Because of this long-term commitment, each volunteer not only undergoes a background check and signs a confidentiality agreement but also completes an



in-depth training program. “As a participant in the Friendly Visitor program,” continues Eldreth, “each volunteer is trained to be a companion to someone with MS who is socially isolated. Whether in the home or a long-term-care facility, every individual living with MS still needs a connection with the community, and we’re hoping that Friendly Visitor meets that need.”

For more information

Call Marie at (302) 655-5610, ext. 16, or send an email of interest to marie.eldreth@MSdelaware.org.

Delaware Chapter support groups

Dover

Kent Lunch Bunch
4th Thurs. of the month
11:30 A.M.–1:30 P.M.
Accessible restaurants
Leader: Regina at 302-734-8749

Georgetown

Shore Group Two
2nd Wed. of the month
1:30 P.M.–3:00 P.M.
CHEERS Community Ctr.
Leaders: Kay at 302-422-9584 or Jamie at 302-684-4513

Harbeson

Sussex Co. MS Shore Gr.
1st Wed. of the month
6:00 P.M.–8:00 P.M.
St. George’s Chapel,
Parish Hall
Leaders: Jamie/Monroe
at 302-684-4513

Newark

Middletown Lunch Bunch
1st Thurs. of the month
12:00 noon–2:00 P.M.
McGlynn’s
Leader: Karen at 302-378-2573

Newark (cont’d)

Main St. Circle of Friends
2nd Wed. of the month
7:00 P.M.–9:00 P.M.
Newark Senior Center
Leader: Sara at 302-737-4694

Wilmington

Coffee & Conversation
1st & 3rd Thurs.
10:30 A.M.–12:00 noon
Sunrise Assisted Living
of Wilm.
Leader: Fran at 302-764-4335



Wilmington (cont’d)

Coping with Life and MS
1st Tues. of the month
4:00 P.M.–5:30 P.M.
St. Paul’s Utd. Methodist
Church
Leader: Sue R. Crichton
at 302-475-4957

MS Advocacy Group introduced to state legislature



The MS Advocacy Group comprises the chapter’s program director, Katrina Holloway, plus (seated L to R) Vickie George, Barb Meyer, and Darnell Trower. Standing are Marie Eldreth, Gail Jasionowski, Diana Caine, and Amy Vittori.

The Delaware Chapter’s MS Advocacy Group was formally introduced to the First State Legislature on Wednesday, April 1—April Fool’s Day. Carrying the tagline “No foolin’! MS is no joke,” the MS advocates delivered cupcakes with their message for the legislators.

“To be invited to Legislative Hall is a first-time honor for us,” says Katrina Holloway, the chapter’s programs director. “We are grateful to our elected officials not only for inviting us but also for giving us an opportunity to highlight five issues that are important to people with

chronic diseases like MS: comprehensive, quality health care; standards for health-care coverage; increased limits for Medicaid eligibility; stem cell research; and adding the MS Society to the list of Contributions to Special Funds on the state tax form.”

“We also presented personal testimonials,” adds the chapter’s programs coordinator, Marie Eldreth. “We want our legislators to really understand how MS affects the lives of their constituents. It’s why our five issues are so very important and need to be addressed.”

About MS advocacy

The movement to obtain MS research funds from the Department of Defense (See “MS advocates highlight issues for Delaware’s legislators in D.C.” on page 7) began when more than 100,000 signatures were collected on a petition. This simple act of petitioning Congress is just one of the many ways that Delawareans can be MS advocates.

“We want to ensure that people with MS have our legislators’ support when and where it counts—when it’s time for them to vote!” notes long-time advocate and chapter program coordinator Marie Eldreth. “We need to continue to focus our advocacy efforts this year, during this time of widespread budget cuts, so we are looking for folks who want to be the ‘voice of MS.’”

“We will train you,” assures Eldreth. “We hope to enlarge and strengthen our group of well-trained and highly motivated MS advocates.”

For more information on becoming an MS advocate, call Marie at (302) 655-5610, ext. 16. Or email her at marie.eldreth@MSdelaware.org.





Representing the Delaware Chapter, six MS advocates joined approximately 500 activists from around the country on March 25, 2009, for the annual MS Public Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. The six-member Delaware delegation included (L to R) the chapter's director of programs, Katrina Holloway; the chapter's president, Kate Cowperthwait; (seated) Vickie George, founder of the *Yes U Can* fitness program; from AAA Mid-Atlantic, Gail Jasionowski; and the chapter's chair, Carl Hertrich. The photo is courtesy of fellow MS advocate and past-chapter chair, Tom O'Brien.

MS advocates highlight issues for Delaware's legislators in D.C.

Gathering in the congressional offices of Representative Michael N. Castle, Senator Thomas R. Carper, and Senator Edward Kaufman, the Delaware delegation highlighted several issues that are important to more than 1,500 Delawareans with MS.

Of the top three issues, the first is support for establishing an MS registry to provide accurate data about the incidence and prevalence of the disease. "We need a disease registry," explains Chapter President Kate Cowperthwait, "so we better understand MS. This, in turn, will help promote research into areas like genetic and environmental risk factors. I'm a firm believer that we need to do something about MS now, and research is one way."

The second issue supported by MS advocates is comprehensive health-care reform. The Society supports several principles that, if applied, should ensure that the health-care needs of all people with MS are met. These principles encompass access to affordable health-care coverage and services, including high-quality, long-term supports and services, and the elimination of disparities and the creation of

standards for covering specific treatments.

The Delaware delegation focused on two health-care coverage issues in particular: life-time caps and the two-year waiting period for Medicare coverage. "We are looking at these health-care issues," notes Program Director Katrina Holloway, "because by eliminating them, we can keep Delawareans with MS out of institutions and in independent living. With accessible long-term care for all, Delawareans can have quality, long-term care in their own homes."

The third issue advocated by the MS delegation is the need for increased funding for MS research. MS activists made history last fall when they moved Congress to approve \$5 million for MS research through the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs. This first-time line-item allocation under the CDMRP is funded through the Department of Defense, and MS activists across the country are advocating for \$15 million more.

To date, U.S. Senator Ted Kaufman (D-Del) has signed on in support of this important funding.

EVENTS

Thank you!

To our sponsors, our volunteers, and our walkers.

Thanks to you all, the Delaware Chapter raised more money for national MS research and the programs and services needed by more than 1,500 Delawareans with MS and their families.

Walk MS: Wilmington Riverfront raised more than \$125,000

Walk MS: Historic Dover raised more than \$30,000

Walk MS: Twilight at Heritage Shores raised more than \$8,000

Walk MS: University of Delaware raised more than \$10,000



Newly diagnosed? Take steps

by Nancy Reitman, R.N., professional resource center nurse

You're in touch with the National MS Society—or you wouldn't be reading this. We hope you've signed up for the at-home course, *Knowledge Is Power*, which is available by mail or e-mail. It's designed to answer a lot of your questions.

We also hope you've called us if you want to talk one on one with someone who's been where you are now. On the other hand, you may feel you've been given more advice than any one person could possibly absorb.

But there is one more thing: As a person with MS, you'll need to move it.

Two researchers at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, searched the medical literature for studies on MS and exercise from 1960 to 2007. Of the 43 papers Dr. Robert Motl and his colleague Erin Snook found and reviewed, 22 had enough data to compute "effect sizes," and "the weighted mean effect size was significantly different from zero." At the 2008 Consortium of MS Centers meeting, the two researchers concluded: "The cumulative evidence supports that exercise training is associated with a small but meaningful improvement in walking mobility in people with MS."

What does [this] mean in plain English? Move it, and you are much more likely to keep moving throughout your life with MS.

If you loved a sport before MS came along (any sport—from golf to ice hockey), you may

be in luck. Call us for help in finding associations that promote adaptive programs in your sport. The chances are that there is one. Or you may find another sport just similar enough to the one you loved to take up instead. Even if your sport is too intermittent to work at every week (skiing, for example) or too inaccessible (no hockey rinks nearby), you can still develop a habit of pleasure in exercise that is something to build on.

But if you are [like] the majority and sports are *so* in

Studies have also shown...

Exercise has positive effects for people with MS who have

- fatigue. Yes, MS fatigue!
- cognitive problems.
- depression.
- weight control issues.
- poor balance.
- muscle weakness.

your past or *so* not in

your life *ever*, you have a challenge. Dr. George Kraft, professor of rehabilitation medicine at the University of Washington, says "You need a prescription for a regular exercise program just as much as you need one for medications to slow down your disease or control your symptoms."

You may need to ask your physician for that prescription—and for a referral to a physical therapist or a rehabilitation physician—and you may need to educate the therapist about MS. As Kraft points out, many PTs are trained in sports medicine or how to deal with the after-effects of accidents or stroke. Ask about their experience with MS. It's appropriate to

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Courtesy of Moore, Ink.

Alayne, diagnosed in 1999

Courtesy of Moore, Ink.



Mary, diagnosed in 1997

Continued from page 9

invite a PT to contact the Society's professional resource center to learn more about MS at **Health Prof_info@nmss.org**.

It's also appropriate to develop an exercise program that fits your lifestyle and appeals to you personally. The Illinois researchers analyzed studies on exercise, not formal physical therapy sessions.

Move it

In partnership with the Christiana Care Health System's Preventive Medicine & Rehabilitation Institute, the chapter offers a free exercise consultation and fitness evaluation to help kick-start your exercise plan.

To take advantage of this exciting new program, call for an application at (302) 655-5610, ext. 16, and ask for Marie.

Society brochures

Read all about it!

Whether you're recently diagnosed or managing "an old friend" of a symptom, the Society offers brochures on a range of issues related to MS. These brochures are reviewed by experts in MS and regularly revised for the most accurate information possible.

Some brochures updated in 2009 include

- *Living with MS.*
- *Multiple Sclerosis and Your Emotions.*
- *Research Directions in MS.*
- *Win-Win Approach to Reasonable Accommodations.*
- *Food for Thought: MS and Nutrition.*
- *A Guide for Caregivers.*
- *Solving Cognitive Problems.*

- *Depression and Multiple Sclerosis.*

In addition, a number of brochures are now available in Spanish. (Además, tenemos disponibles folletos en español.)

Find it here!

You can read or download PDFs of Society brochures at **nationalMSSociety.org/brochures**. Or call (800) 344-4867 for print copies.

For easy searching, brochures are divided into categories: general information, newly diagnosed, employment issues, staying well, managing specific issues, managing major changes, for children & teenagers, and información en español.

You can also download a PDF catalog with brief descriptions of all the publications the Society offers clients.

Extra! Extra!

One brochure regularly updated with breaking news is *Disease-Modifying Drugs*. The online version (**nationalMSSociety.org/DMD**) includes the most recent information possible on the disease-modifying drugs Avonex, Betaseron, Copaxone, Novantrone, Rebif, and Tysabri. The booklet covers how they are taken, their benefits and side effects, and how to pay for them. Check back regularly for new reports on DMDs.

\$19 million for MS research

Fast Forward, LLC, a program of the National MS Society, recently garnered \$19 million for early-stage MS research through a new partnership with EMD Serono.

“This partnership will provide critical resources to underfunded stages of the drug development process,” says Dr. Timothy Coetzee, Fast Forward’s executive director.

For more information, visit fastforward.org.

A call to action

World MS Day

A minimum of two million people worldwide live with MS. For the first time this year, 80 MS organizations around the globe took part in World MS Day on May 27.

In the United States, with the opportunity for health-care reform a real possibility, the Society asked all supporters of the MS movement to contact their federal legislators on World MS Day and voice support for universal health-care coverage.

“There should be one global standard of health care to ensure that all people with



MS can lead a life of possibility, dignity, and fulfillment,” says Joyce Nelson, president and chief executive officer of the National MS Society. “On World MS Day, Americans can do their part by showing their support for national health-care reform.”

To learn more about the Society’s national health-care reform principles and tips on contacting your legislators, visit nationalMSSociety.org, and click the gray bar at the top, Government Affairs & Advocacy.

For more information on participants and activities, visit worldMSday.org.

Momentum is online

“Want to meet other people living with MS or read about the latest MS research and therapies? *Momentum*, the national magazine of the Society, offers this and more.

Each issue of *Momentum* is online in a convenient PDF format—often before a print copy can reach your mailbox—and free. Clickable links give you immediate access to more info on a given topic and allow you to respond to stories with your own thoughts and tips. You can also download and send any story to others via e-mail.

Go to nationalMSSociety.org/magazine, and click on Current Issue or Find a Back Issue.

For *Momentum* readers with vision issues

Click on the magnifying glass icon to enlarge any *Momentum* page—two, three, even five times bigger.

Phil rides for MS

Phil Keoghan, host of CBS’s *The Amazing Race*, cycled across America—and he took the National MS Society with him.

For more, visit philridesacrossamerica.com.



Nervous System Repair and Protection in MS Conference

by Eric Hübler, staff writer

Let's be clear: To the layperson, the presentations at the Nervous System Repair and Protection in MS Conference might not have seemed very clear. The meeting in New York City in January consisted of over 70 scientists talking to scientists and showing each other slides with titles like *RXR α* and *RA signaling*.

[But] let's be clear about something else: For anyone interested in MS, the event was historic. The Nervous System Repair and Protection Initiative involves more researchers at more labs worldwide than any other MS research initiative. Bringing so many participants together to share their results—and their hopes for continuing the work beyond 2010, when the original grant from the National MS Society concludes—was a milestone in collaboration.

Creating milestones together

Collaboration is at the heart of everything the Society does—including research. “The questions these days are so big, the lone scientist in the corner lab doesn't cut it anymore,” says Patricia O'Looney, the Society's vice president of

biomedical research. “You need collaborations.”

The initiative consists of four projects, each with the common goal of discovering ways to protect and repair brain tissue from the damage caused by MS.

In the United States,

- Peter Calabresi, M.D., and his team at Johns Hopkins University are investigating better ways to detect and quantify tissue injury. They are also testing agents that may protect the nervous system from further damage.
- Ian D. Duncan, B.V.M.S., PH.D., F.R.C.PATH., F.R.S.E., and his team at the University of Wisconsin at Madison are developing better imaging technologies to follow damage and detect repair,

which is essential for tracking whether repair strategies are working. They are also working on potential cell therapies.

And across “the pond,”

- Gavin Giovannoni, M.B.B.CH., F.C.P., PH.D., of Queen Mary University of London, and his team are attempting to turn cells into vehicles that can deliver “repair” molecules to injured areas.
- Charles French-Constant, PH.D., F.R.C.P., of the universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, and his team are working on identifying and amplifying natural repair factors in the brain.

Each has spawned new experiments and swept in more researchers. At Johns Hopkins, 22 people were receiving Promise: 2010 funding, yet 62 people were participating—meaning, in effect, 40 free brains for the MS movement.

Supporters and researchers connect

Several donors also attended the conference to learn where their aid is going.

Continued on next page

For the latest research developments, visit nationalMSSociety.org/Research.

And click on **Research News**.



Left to right are Peter Calabresi, M.D.; Gavin Giovannoni, M.B.B.Ch., F.C.P., Ph.D.; Charles French-Constant, Ph.D., F.R.C.P.; and Ian D. Duncan, B.V.M.S., Ph.D., F.R.C.Path., F.R.S.E.

“It’s just great to see this kind of progress. You can get a sense of the enthusiasm, the magnitude of it,” says long-time Society supporter and honorary life director Charlie Goodyear.

“It was remarkable this morning, seeing someone from London ask a question of someone from California and establish an immediate rapport,” says the San Francisco-based architect and architecture professor Peter Thaler, who lives with MS. “It’s not unlike teaching architecture: talking about what happened in the past and what could happen in the future.”

E.J. Levy, an active fundraiser who lives with MS and closely monitors research progress, says she was grateful for so many scientists trying to cure her, but she also wishes the initiative had yielded more clinical trials by now.

“I realize that research can be a tortoise, but I’d rather have the hare,” she says.

As if in answer, researchers at the conference announced several small trials on cell therapy, two years ahead of the original plan of Promise: 2010.

Cambridge’s Siddharthan Chandran, M.D., Ph.D.,

describes one such trial involving the optic nerve, which he hopes will benefit the missing tribes of MS—those with advanced disease who have few medical options.

“It would be terrific to come back here in two years’ time and tell you the final outcome of that,” he says.

More trials are coming, the project leaders promises. “I’m a big believer in getting your feet wet. As we get into these clinical trials, we’ll learn,” Calabresi says.

Motivation to keep moving

Volunteers are essential to clinical trials; without them, clinical trials either take years to complete or are not completed at all.

Chandran wished MS patients could be enrolled in trials routinely as has been done in oncology for decades. Some existing drugs that could be tested in MS are off-patent and “cheap as chips,” he says.

Calabresi spoke about a patient who was diagnosed at 17 after experiencing foot drop while jogging and who, at 26, uses a wheelchair.

“She looks at me and says, ‘Can’t you do anything for me?’ It just makes me sick, but it’s also an incredible motivator to take that energy and put it back into the work.”



Are you getting enough vitamin D? Does it matter?

by Allen C. Bowling, M.D., Ph.D.

Recent studies have significantly changed our understanding of the role of vitamin D in health and disease, and some of these new understandings have important implications for people with MS.

In the past, it was assumed that most people had adequate vitamin D levels and that the effects of vitamin D were restricted to regulating calcium absorption and maintaining bone health, including the prevention of osteoporosis (thinning bones). Studies over the past decade have shown that these views are incorrect and that up to 90 percent of American children and seniors may be vitamin D deficient.

Yes, it matters!

In addition to effects on calcium absorption and bone health, vitamin D exerts important actions on many other body systems, including the immune system.

Adequate levels may improve muscle strength and prevent or decrease the severity of MS. Inadequate levels have been implicated in several forms of cancer, heart and lung diseases, depression, schizophrenia, and a number of other autoimmune conditions.

Much additional research on vitamin D is clearly needed. But based on current information, there are options for people with MS to consider. One is to have a

blood test known as 25-hydroxyvitamin D. The test shows how much vitamin D is actually in a person's body—and that's the real measure of a deficient or adequate level. If the vitamin D level is low, supplements in appropriate doses can be taken.

Another option is simply to take vitamin D supplements without the blood test. The disadvantage of this "blind" approach is that vitamin D supplements may be

unnecessary or the doses too small or too large.

The final option is to do nothing. People who take this option won't spend money on testing or supplements, but if they are vitamin D deficient, they won't obtain the potential benefits [of supplements].

To determine an appropriate vitamin D strategy, people with MS should discuss their situations with their health-care providers.

Sources of vitamin D

- Sunshine—BUT...
 - most people with MS need to avoid overheating.
 - all people need protection from skin cancer (such as sunscreen, sun block, hats)
- Fortified foods, including brands of orange juice, cereals, dairy products
- Oily fish, such as salmon
- Supplements

Dr. Allen Bowling is the medical director of the Multiple Sclerosis Service at the Colorado Neurological Institute (CNI) and clinical associate professor of neurology at the University of Colorado, Denver, and Health Sciences Center. Additional information about unconventional medicine may be found in his book, *Complementary and Alternative Medicine and Multiple Sclerosis* (2nd edition, Demos Medical Publishing), and on his Web site, NeurologyCare.net.

MS Learn Online teaches job strategies

Seventy percent of people with MS are unemployed, and at least half of these people would like to be working.

If you're one of them—or know someone who is—check out the latest offering from MS Learn Online: *MS in the Workplace*.

This free, two-part Webcast presents strategies to help you reenter the work force—and maintain your place once you're in it.

MS in the Workplace is on nationalMSSociety.org/webcasts.

Other MS Learn Online programs address research, intimacy, and symptom management, and are accessible any time.

No registration is required. Go to nationalMSSociety.org/mslearnonline.

About *MS in the Workplace*

Part 1 targets the employee or potential employee with MS. Rehabilitation counselor Kurt L. Johnson, PH.D., addresses issues as varied as how to harness energy and improve cognition while navigating your health care and the human resources department in a prospective company.

Part 2 targets people in hiring positions, gives employers the basics on MS, and features some who have employees with MS. “Their personal stories show that people with MS are as productive as anyone else,” says John Aden, senior manager of program development for the Society. It also shows what “reasonable accommodations” mean and under what circumstances an employer is responsible for putting them in place.

“This video clears up misgivings an employer might have,” adds Aden. “Someone with MS or a member of his or her family can send this link to an employer.”

Other employment resources include nationalMSSociety.org/momspr08 for *Momentum*



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magazine's article, “For A Successful Job Interview.” And even before you've landed that job, check out *Disclosing MS in the Workplace*. Click through the menu on the right for a program to help you make an educated decision on whether or not to disclose your medical condition—and to whom.

Rehab counselors often advise their clients to ask themselves: Why am I telling? Who am I telling? How much am I telling? What are the positive and negative results? If the anticipated results fall more often in the positive than negative category, that will help you decide. Remember: Once you disclose, you can't take it back.

For more information, go to nationalMSSociety.org/disclosework.

January 13–May 13, 2009

In memory of

James L. Wroten

From: Patricia & Stephen
Cebenka
Gabriel & Eve
Archangelo
Dennis F. Haley
Dianne M. Kleckner
Brian Cox
Diane Willette

Antonette Sirolli

From: Ursula Guerino-
Amabile

Battista Turcol

From: Will & Annette Black
Lydia J. Soja

Carlin Danna Heerschap

From: Walmart

Steven Manno

From: Sandra E. Bowen

Dr. Joseph M. Barsky, Jr.

From: Thelma & Joe Pfaff

Michael J. Gullotti

From: Marcy Cannon

Bill Ackerman

From: William & Dolores
Stewart

Karen J. Nieweg

From: Jim Butler
Jane Crowley
Pete & Freda Shorter
Michele & Kevin
Beane
George & Vivian
Thomas
Kathy & Joseph
Halada
Kathlyn L. Rowen,
M.D.

Willie J. Savage

From: Gladys Mimms

Alice G. Burzon

From: Glenn & Gretchen
Taylor

Mildred L. H. Raye

From: Barbara Shipp

Ralph Gallegan

From: Joyce Thompson

C. Guy Hostetter

From: Smyrna Lions Club

Audrey Slover

From: Lee & Shirley Tibbett
Kim & Wayne Case

Jean Quinlan Graham

From: Donna & Seth
Eilberg
Margaret & Robert
Lewis
Dennis & Paula Kelly
Conrado & Clavel
Gempesaw
Mr. & Mrs. William J.
Manning
Elisabeth Fogt
Stephen Manning
Dionne & Michael
Manning

Edward S. Rojewski

From: Donna & Russ Evans

Kenneth Schlotzhauer

From: Jim & Francine
Murphy

Irene Diffley

From: Ronald E. Rutter

January 13–May 13, 2009

In honor of

George Abel's 70th birthday

From: Anne & Edmond
Tinucci

Remember . . .

Whether you make a one-time contribution or a life-time investment, your donation to the Delaware Chapter will be put to good use. For details, contact the chapter's major gifts officer, Dick Riggs, at (302) 655-5610, ext. 24.

Honor someone special or celebrate a special event

When Doug and Joann “tied the knot” last spring, they also established a scholarship fund. In lieu of wedding gifts, they asked for contributions.

The donations allowed the couple to realize their dream of providing a four-year scholarship to a worthy student living with MS. It was easy. They used the Society’s Honorary Fund Web page.

Anyone can join the movement and honor special people and events.

Both the Society’s Honorary Fund and Memorial Fund Web pages let you create online tributes or memorials that can be personalized with photos and stories. Fund pages allow colleagues, friends, and family to make online donations on behalf of the honoree. Tools help you get the word out and track the progress of your fund.

Go to nationalMSsociety.org, and click on Donate, and then Create a Fund.



Luis, diagnosed in 2005

From there, you can

- create an honorary fund to recognize a milestone or accomplishment or to say thank you. Commemorate a birthday, wedding, anniversary, or help someone celebrate Mother’s Day or Father’s Day.

- create a memorial fund in memory of a loved one who has died.

Honor someone—long term

Ellen and David recently set up a charitable gift annuity to provide retirement income to Jen, their caregiver of many years. To learn how you, too, can establish a charitable gift annuity in tribute to someone special, contact the Society’s planned giving specialist, Gillian Smith, at (800) 923-7727, or visit nationalMSsociety.org/plannedgiving.

In Delaware, call the chapter’s major gifts officer, Dick Riggs, at (302) 655-5610, ext. 24.

Are you up for the challenge? And ready for the ride of your life!

The sense of accomplishment that you’ll feel as you cross the finish line can only be matched by the difference you’ll be making in the lives of people affected by MS.

An unforgettable ride.
An unbeatable destination.
Bike to create a world free of MS.

visit bikeMS.org

bike
MS



Team Pay Simple,
riding in Bike MS since 2004



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**

Delaware Chapter
Two Mill Rd.
Suite 106
Wilmington DE
19806

**Free mailing
for blind
and
handicapped**

Mark your calendars

June

- 7 Take Me Out to the Ball Game: Wilmington Blue Rocks
Readathon Awards Party & Blue Rocks-Readathon Game
- 8 MS Golf Tournament featuring the Delaware Park \$2 Million Shoot-Out
- 21 Take Me Out to the Ball Game: Delmarva Shorebirds

October

- 1 Bike MS: Bike to the Bay Pre-Registration Night
- 3-4 Bike MS: Bike to the Bay
- 24 Annual Conference & Schacter
Research Symposium

November

- 26 PNC Bank Thanksgiving Day Run/Walk for MS

For more info

(302) 655-5610

www.MSdelaware.org