

MS Clinical Care *Connection*

Focus on Wellness

Spring 2014

Inside This Issue

Diet

Exercise

Mood

Patient Resources

Local wellness programs:
1-800-344-4867

Information about living well
www.nationalmssociety.org/Living-Well-With-MS/Health-Wellness

Complementary and alternative treatments
www.nationalmssociety.org/Treating-MS/Complementary-Alternative-Medicines

Can Do Multiple Sclerosis, a lifestyle empowerment program:
MSCanDo.org

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

Studies demonstrating an association between Vitamin D levels and MS risk have led an understanding of it as an environmental risk factor (Aschiero, 2014 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24445558; Aschiero, 2013 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24289836; Munger, 2006 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17179460). Vitamin D status has been shown in a longitudinal study (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22926855) to be inversely associated with MS MRI activity. A recent survey of more than 2,000 people with MS (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24628020) suggested an association between diet and quality of life, disability and relapse rate. Dietary salt intake is believed to stimulate inflammatory activity (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23467095), which may have a negative effect on MS. Data regarding polyunsaturated fatty acids is mixed; a 2007 Cochrane review (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23235605) showed little evidence of benefit, but small trials suggest beneficial effect (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23026980).

Clinician Resources

For wellness professionals
www.nationalMSSociety.org/PRC

Free mobile app for MS healthcare professionals made possible by Bayer HealthCare and Questcor Pharmaceuticals, Inc.:
<http://ntl.ms/clinicalapp>
for iPhone, Android and Windows

Exercise

A recent study of 88 adults (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24607835) demonstrated physical improvement and improved cognitive function after 12 weeks of exercise. A 12-week resistance training study of 42 patients (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24463236) demonstrated improvement in muscle strength that persisted after 12 weeks of detraining. Another study of community based balance and strengthening exercises (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24575302) for people with MS who use bilateral gait support demonstrated improvements in balance after a 10-week program. In a 2011 review of nine randomized trials of exercise and MS (<http://summaries.cochrane.org/CD003980/the-impact-of-exercise-therapy-for-multiple-sclerosis>), there was strong evidence in favor of exercise therapy, compared to no therapy, regarding muscle function and mobility. A separate study found that endurance training (ET) in severely disabled patients with progressive MS could induce cardiovascular adaptations (Skjerbæk AG, 2014 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24057428).

Mood

There is a 50% lifetime prevalence of clinical depression in MS and a 36% lifetime prevalence of anxiety disorder (Korostil & Feinstein, 2007 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17294613; Feinstein 2004 <http://www1.cpa-apc.org/Publications/Archives/CJP/2004/march/feinstein.pdf>).

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.