PARENTS’ PULL OUT
ISSUE #19 : WHERE IS THE CURE?

REASONS TO BE HOPEFUL FOR A CURE

The National MS Society

- Currently spends $50 million annually, for over 380 MS investigations
- Has invested a total of $820 million since first 3 grants in 1947
  - Recruited more than 800 new MS researchers to the field
    - Provided early career support and funding to nearly every thought leader in the field of MS research
- Set the standards in the areas of diagnosis, symptom management, complementary and alternative medicine, pediatric MS, rehabilitation research, clinical trial strategies, and stem cell research
  - Drove research uncovering genes contributing to MS susceptibility and new treatment avenues
- Paved the way for all existing FDA-approved therapies - none of which existed just 20 years ago.

The Society continues to seek out and support the brightest minds to solve the problem of MS, and leading collaborations including a global alliance to find solutions for people affected by progressive MS.

In addition, the National Institutes of Health (funded by your tax dollars) spends approximately $100 million per year toward research related to MS.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NUMBERS

Prevalence, Worldwide:
2.3 MILLION PEOPLE
While WAITING For a Cure...

Everybody wants a cure for MS. And everyone feels impatient waiting for it to come. The best thing someone with MS can do while waiting for the cure, is to keep as healthy as he or she can, and try to be positive and upbeat. Can someone with MS be healthy? Yes! And while thinking about a cure makes everyone feel hopeful, it is also important to enjoy life every day.

Here are ways someone with MS and his or her family can keep healthy and happy while waiting:

- **Talk**
  to one another about important things

- **EAT**
  nutritious meals together as a family

- **Laugh**
  and have fun together as a family

- **Learn**
  new things

- **Exercise**!
  Get regular medical and dental check-ups

- **Work**
  with the doctor to manage MS symptoms and **slow down** MS, if possible
According to psychologists, fantasy play and make-believe are vital parts of childhood development. In this essential stage, children engage in pretending and fantasy play in order to ponder and absorb important information and attempt to gain mastery over complex feelings.

Children don’t often feel as though they have a lot of control over their lives; in pretend play, however, a child can be the person who takes care of others in need, saves the day, or finds the cure for MS.

In other words, make-believe can help a child feel stronger. That may be why children like to impersonate superheroes, parents, or doctors. Role-playing offers a chance to work out feelings of helplessness and gain a sense of power or control.

“**My child likes to **PRETEND** he is a SCIENTIST and has invented a CURE for MS. Is this healthy behavior?”**

Your child’s pretending to have found a cure for MS may reflect her deepest wishes, while also enabling her to feel in greater control of the feelings she has about MS. Encourage her to share her fantasies with you. If you have concerns that your child cannot distinguish her fantasy from reality, or if you detect anxiety or worries that seem excessive, you may wish to discuss the situation with a counselor. More likely, she is engaging in age-appropriate behavior that is helping her cope with the challenges of MS in your family. Also, many future careers are born in the fantasy play of children and their personal experiences. Perhaps your child will be inspired to pursue medical research or clinical care in his or her future.

**SHARE** your child’s ideas for what a **CURE** will look like.

You can send your stories by e-mail: keepsmyelin@nmss.org or to:

**KEEP S’MYELIN**  
National MS Society  
900 S. Broadway #200  
Denver, CO 80209
YOU CAN HELP DRIVE RESEARCH FORWARD IN MANY WAYS:

1. You can sign up to be an MS activist and advocate for research funding and other issues: nationalMSsociety.org/advocacy

2. You can consider participating in genetic studies: Go to nationalMSsociety.org/research and click on Participate in Research Studies

The National MS Society offers over 60 publications on a variety of topics related to managing and living with MS.

TO LEARN MORE, contact an MS Navigator at 1-800-344-4867 or visit: nationalMSsociety.org/brochures.

KEEP S’MYELIN

Keep S’myelin is a publication for children with parents or other relatives with multiple sclerosis. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (“Society”) is proud to be a source of information on multiple sclerosis. The information provided is based on professional advice, published experience, and expert opinion, but does not constitute medical advice. For specific information and advice, consult a qualified physician. The Society does not endorse products, services or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered helpful information. The Society assumes no liability for the recipient’s use of any product or service mentioned.

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