

KNOWLEDGE BROCHURE SERIES

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Exercise & MS



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knowledge resources

There once was a time when people with multiple sclerosis were advised to avoid exercise for fear it would bring on MS symptoms. Those days are over! Exercise is an essential part of everyone's health, well-being, and overall quality of life—whether or not they have MS.

Here are some tips to consider:

- 6 **Get moving!** A lot of people avoid exercise because they don't have the energy. But, once you make exercise part of your routine, it can increase your energy level
- 6 **Keep moving!** Since many MS symptoms are thought to be the result of or aggravated by lack of exercise, it's important to start and stay with an exercise regimen¹
- 6 **Experience the fringe benefits.** Being active isn't just about strength, flexibility, or cardiovascular health. It can also improve bladder function and fatigue, elevate good cholesterol, protect against osteoporosis, and provide a more resilient recovery in case of a relapse¹



- 6 **Get inspired.** At the beginning, exercise can seem like a chore. Talk to someone who exercises regularly. They can inspire you and tell you about the benefits they've experienced



- 6 **Use the buddy system.** Get an exercise partner or start an exercise group of your own. It's harder to put off exercise if you have a set time and place to meet others
- 6 **Keep it cool.** Since heat aggravates MS symptoms, exercise in air-conditioned environments or in cool outdoor conditions
- 6 **Listen to your body.** If you experience symptoms you didn't have before a workout, decrease your intensity or stop your workout. Also, consult your doctor about an exercise program to fit your needs

- 6 **Pool your efforts.** Swimming is a great way to exercise and keep your body temperature down. Ideally, the pool temperature should be between 80°F and 84°F²



- 6 **Do what you want.** If there's something you've been wanting to try, like Tai chi or tennis, here's your opportunity! Make exercising as fun as possible and you're more likely to keep with it
- 6 **Check with your doctor first.** Always talk with your doctor before starting an exercise program



Want to know more?

Visit the **National Multiple Sclerosis Society** Web site at www.nmss.org. Among a wealth of other information they have articles regarding exercise. You can also search for information at

About.com

msaa.com (Multiple Sclerosis Association of America)

msfocus.org (MS Foundation)

WebMD.com

Know there's someone to turn to

While there's no substitute for medical advice from your doctor, **Shared Solutions®** is here to help if you have questions about MS-related issues or need therapy support. Just give us a call at **1-800-887-8100**.

You can also visit www.sharedsolutions.com for information about MS and lifestyle management. We're here to help those living with MS live better with support, knowledge, and answers.





References:

1. Multiple Sclerosis Foundation. The fitness prescription.
2. WebMD. Multiple sclerosis: exercise and multiple sclerosis. Available at: <http://my.webmd.com/content/article/57/66132.htm>. Accessed July 13, 2005.

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