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April 2022 Newsletter

Offering support, care, and hope...*right here at home!*

All Support Group Meetings and Newsletter Folding are Cancelled Until Further Notice!

We are continuing to work behind the scenes to make sure the telephone calls, emails, and office needs are being handled. It is important to us that we provide up-to-date information on our website and Facebook page for you. Please stay safe and stay well!

To receive newsletters, send your email address to: officemanager@tristatems.org

**The mission of the Tri-State Multiple Sclerosis Association
is to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with MS & their families in
Southern IN, Southern IL & Western KY**

Mediterranean Diet May Reduce your Risk of MS

Susan Reynolds RN MSCN

Are you interested in improving your overall health while improving your brain health as well? The survey that our office sent out a few months ago indicated that many of you are interested in diet and nutrition for your health. If you have not returned the survey, please do so today. We are very interested in what you want to learn about MS.

People with multiple sclerosis may benefit from a Mediterranean diet. A large population-based study published in 2012, reported that older adults who followed this diet, which is rich in fruits, vegetables, fish, and grains, showed less damage to the brain’s small vessels. This damage is a normal part of aging, but it can also be caused by diseases such as MS.

A Mediterranean regimen is more than just a diet. You must drop the idea that you are “on a diet”. This is a way of life. The higher adherence to the MIND diet, short for Mediterranean-DAASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay, may protect brain tissue from further damage in people with multiple sclerosis, new research suggests. A recent study, “MIND Diet Adherence Might be Associated with a Reduced Odds of Multiple Sclerosis: Results from a Case–Control Study,” was published in the journal *Neurology and Therapy*. The higher adherence to the MIND diet, which means eating green, leafy vegetables as well as beans, nuts, berries, and fish seems to significantly lower the likelihood of developing multiple sclerosis, according to this study. The findings also suggest that the chances of developing the disease may be higher in people who eat more cheese, poultry, sweets, and fried foods.

The 80/20 rule as a guide for your everyday diet: **eat nutritious foods 80 percent of the time and have a serving of your favorite treat with the other 20 percent.** For the “80 percent” part of the plan, focus on drinking lots of water and eating nutritious foods that include whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. For your treats, or the “20 percent” part, eat your favorite foods in moderation. For example, you might have a small piece of chocolate cake today and a drink a glass of red wine tomorrow -- just not both at the same time. This way of eating is easier to maintain than stricter diets. The best thing about the 80/20 rule is that you're never saying, "I can't eat that." Instead, you're saying, "I can eat this today and have that tomorrow."

Load your plate with fruits and vegetables. Spinach, kale, broccoli, and other leafy green vegetables are rich in many brain-loving nutrients. Eat some every day. Limit sugar and processed foods, *including red meat, butter, sweets, fried and fast foods, and packaged foods.* Lower sodium intake. Increase fruits and vegetables. Eat lean sources of protein. Eat healthy fats (fish). Consume adequate amounts of fiber and fluids, and eat plenty of whole grains. Whole grains (oats, barley, quinoa, brown rice, etc) are rich in many of the B vitamins that work to reduce inflammation of the brain. Whole grains are also an excellent source of fiber.

Don't forget fish. Fish is a great source of omega-3, and it's good for your brain. At least twice a week, eat five ounces of fish rich in omega-3, such as salmon, cod, haddock, tuna, or halibut. If you don't like fish, try walnuts, flaxseeds, or soybeans instead.

Get plenty of fiber and fluids. Adequate fiber and fluid intake is important for regular bowel movements, as constipation is a common symptom of MS. Get 25 to 35 grams of fiber daily and at least 64 ounces of water (eight 8-ounce cups of water a day). Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are an excellent source of fiber.

Give up salt. High levels of sodium can increase inflammation levels in the body. Since Western diets tend to be quite high in salt, researchers have been looking at whether salt could increase the risk of developing MS, or influence how quickly MS progresses. Sodium is a primary component of salt. Limit sodium intake to less than 2,000 mg a day in individuals with MS and less than 1500 mg a day for those with both MS and heart disease risk factors.

Try using herbs instead. I use Mrs. Dash and other spices instead of salt. Many herbs and spices, such as turmeric, cinnamon, and ginger, are packed with antioxidants that may decrease harmful inflammation in the brain and elsewhere. The strong flavors and the bright, intense colors are clues to the benefits of spices.

You have permission to eat (but not overeat) dark chocolate. Dark chocolate contains flavonoids, which are strong antioxidants. They can improve blood flow to the brain and reduce inflammation. Unsweetened cocoa powder offers the greatest benefit, followed by dark chocolate with at least 72 percent cocoa solids.

Drink red wine in moderation. Resveratrol, found in red wine and the skin of red grapes, is a potent antioxidant. Red wine has immunomodulatory and neuroprotective properties, and may affect MS. Stick to the maximum recommended daily amounts of one glass for women and two for men. If you don't like wine, you can drink red grape juice for the same effect.

Take Vitamin D. Low levels of Vitamin D have been associated with increased risk of developing and worsening MS. Vitamin D affects the immune system and may be a neuroprotective agent. My neurologist at Vanderbilt has me taking 2,000 IU of Vitamin D daily. Maintaining normal levels of Vitamin D is very important in MS care. A daily dose of 2,000 IU Vitamin D is thought by most neurologists to be safe in individuals with MS.

Are you prepared for the summer heat?

It's time to apply for a free cooling vest. Qualified individuals can apply through June 1.

Multiple Sclerosis Foundation www.msfocus.org or call 1-888-MSFOCUS (673-6287)

Multiple Sclerosis Association of America www.mymsaa.org or call 1-800-532-7667

The following pharmaceutical companies have scheduled educational dinner programs in the tri-state area. For more information, visit their websites, or call them for dates and locations.

Biogen. Vumerity.com/events or call 1-866-955-9999

EMD Serono. MAVENCLADevents.com or call 1-855-685-0738

We're Updating Our Mailing and Contact Lists

We need your help in updating our mailing and contact lists! If you would like to be added to or removed from our mailing list, please complete the information below. If you are currently subscribed to the newsletter, we want to know if you wish to continue receiving the newsletter.

Mail your response to: Tri-State MS Association; 971-C S. Kenmore Dr; Evansville, IN 47714

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Ted Donosky MS Golf Scramble



The Tri-State Multiple Sclerosis Association would like to take this opportunity to ask for your support of our upcoming Ted Donosky MS Golf Scramble. This annual event will take place on Monday, June 6, at Rolling Hills Country Club in Newburgh, Indiana.

There are many ways for you and your company to support this exciting event at the beautiful Rolling Hills Country Club, all while helping a local charity! All money raised by the Tri-State Multiple Sclerosis Association will be used to provide support, care, and hope to thousands of MS individuals & their families in the tri-state area. Call us at 812-423-5943 for more information on how you or your company can be involved!

Thank you

Thank you to each of the businesses and individuals listed below for your continued support during these challenging times. We greatly appreciate your generous donations.

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