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August 2022 Newsletter

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

We are continuing to work in the office to make sure the telephone calls, emails, and office needs are being handled. If you are in need of an in person meeting, please call the office and we will be glad to make arrangements to meet with you. It is important to us that we provide up-to-date information on our website and Facebook page for you.

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**

How to find a Legitimate Health Website

Susan M Reynolds RN MSCN

People frequently tell me about things they find on the internet. There is a lot of good information on the internet, but there is also a lot of bad information. It can be difficult to tell what is credible from what is incredible on the web. Many websites make fantastic claims directed at people with MS. I frequently see *Facebook* ads enticing me to click and read about some unbelievable claim from a company that has a treatment or cure for MS. Some of the information on the internet is valuable, but keep in mind that *anything* can be put on the internet!

There is no guarantee that the information you find is accurate or up to date; however, there are some clues that help verify a website’s legitimacy. The NIH (National Institute of Health) and the Medical Library Association have very good information on how to spot legitimate Health websites. The following is a summary of their suggestions:

Become familiar with the websites that publish legitimate medical research articles. Examples include Medline Plus (www.medlineplus.gov) and Health Finder (www.healthfinder.gov).

The Medical Library Association (www.mlanet.org) provides a “top ten” Health Information Sites list where you can find legitimate health information. To access the list, go to mlanet.org and type ‘MLA Top Health Websites’ in the search bar. The sites are categorized according to Health Conditions, Community Specific Resources, Self-Advocacy, and Drugs & Supplements. Some of the sites are listed below:

- ✓ National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (www.nccih.nih.gov)
- ✓ Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov)
- ✓ Kids Health (www.kidshealth.org)
- ✓ Medline Plus (<http://medlineplus.gov>)
- ✓ Healthfinder (www.healthfinder.gov)
- ✓ Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.com)
- ✓ For Caregivers (www.caregiver.org)

The following are legitimate websites associated strictly with Multiple Sclerosis:

- Multiple Sclerosis Association of America (mymsaa.org) - MS World (msworld.org)
- Multiple Sclerosis Foundation (www.msfocus.org) - Can Do MS (cando-ms.org)
- Accelerated Cure Project (www.acceleratedcure.org) - My MS Team (mymsteam.com)
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society (www.nmss.org) - Patients like Me (patientslikeme.com)
- Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (msif.org) - Consortium of MS Centers (cmsc.org)
- MS Research News (multiplesclerosisnewstoday.com) - Rocky Mountain MS Center (mscenter.org)
- International Organization of MS Nurses (iomsn.org)

The following website safety information comes from the Medical Library Association:

1. **Who pays for it?** The source of the website's funding should be clearly stated or apparent.
2. **Who runs the site?** All legitimate websites should clearly state who is responsible for the site and its information.
3. **How does the website document the evidence supporting its information?** Does the site list professional advisory members or consultants? Medical facts and figures should have references (such as citations of articles published in medical journals). Websites should list the credentials of the people who prepared and reviewed the material included. Also, opinions or advice should be clearly set apart from information that is "evidence based" (or based on research results). Testimonials from people who say they have benefitted from a treatment are not evidence based, and usually cannot be corroborated. Compare the information you find on the internet with other resources. Check two or three articles in the medical literature or medical textbooks to see whether the information or advice is similar.
4. **The web address itself can provide additional information about the site.** Government agencies have ".gov" in the address. Educational institutions (such as universities) have ".edu" in the address. Professional scientific or research organizations have ".org" in the address. Commercial sites are identified with ".com".
5. **How current is the information on the site?** Health information changes constantly. Therefore, as new information is learned about diseases through research and patient care, the website should update the information. The latest revisions should be clearly posted. This usually appears at the bottom of the page. The website should also say whether the health information is intended for a patient or a health professional.
6. **Many websites voluntarily participate in HON or "Health on the Internet"**, a foundation that specifies eight principles known as the "Internet Foundation Code of Conduct", intended to hold website developers to basic ethical standards and make sure consumers always know the source and purpose of the data they are reading. Sites displaying the Foundation's symbol are generally considered credible sources for health information.
7. **Many websites will ask you to subscribe to the site.** They will ask you for personal information or even collect a fee. Any site asking for personal information should explain what the site will and will not do with the information. Read any privacy policies on the website, and do not sign up for anything unless you fully understand. Also, a legitimate website will always offer a way to get in touch with the website owner with problems, feedback, and questions.

8. **BE CAREFUL about sharing your social security number.** Find out why your number is needed, how it will be used, and what will happen if you do not share this information. Only enter your social security number on secure websites. Consider calling your doctor's office or health insurance company to give this information over the phone, rather than giving it online.
9. **Be extra careful when receiving e-mail messages that provide health information.** Always look for the source of the message. Some companies use e-mail to advertise products or attract people to their website. Be careful of a company or person that is promoting a medical product or service in an e-mail while not providing supporting medical evidence.

When in doubt, you should ask your doctor if you want to try something you have seen on a website, particularly before you buy any products. Be very careful about giving credit card information on the internet. Check to see if they have a secure database such as Verisign™.

Websites with Covid-19 Information

To find updated information on Covid-19, visit the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

For information specific to *Indiana* go to: www.coronavirus.in.gov

For information specific to *Kentucky* go to: www.kycovid19.ky.gov

For information specific to *Illinois* go to: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19.html>



Southwestern Behavioral Healthcare, located in Evansville, operates a community Crisis Line that is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This is part of an overall Crisis Services program that includes a Mobile Crisis Response Team and a Crisis Stabilization Unit.

Beginning August 1st, 2022, Southwestern Behavioral Healthcare will add a feature to make Crisis Services more accessible to those who are hard of hearing or have difficulties with speech. On that date, a chat feature will be available to allow someone in crisis to contact the Crisis Services staff without using a telephone. This will provide a convenient, safe, confidential way for someone in crisis to communicate with trained staff who can listen, assist with coping techniques, and link to additional services as needed.

After its August 1st launch, the chat feature will be available Monday-Friday, from 1 a.m. to 8 a.m. and from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. As their services grow and expand, the Crisis Services will be able to offer the chat option on additional days and times. The chat feature will be available through the Crisis Services homepage: southwestern.org/crisisservices/.

If you have any questions, email Terry Gish at gisht@southwestern.org.



988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

A new Mental Health line has been launched nationwide. Dialing 988 is an easy way to request support and care for people going through mental health-related distress or for people who are concerned about a loved one. The service is available for texting or chatting.



**The Evansville Otters, the Jillson Family & TSMSA invite you to
“Strike Out MS”
Sunday, August 28th at 12:35p.m.**

**Join us for an afternoon of Fun with Family and Friends
at Bosse Field, 23 Don Mattingly Way, Evansville, IN 47711**

We will be giving out **FREE tickets** to anyone who would like to attend this exciting game!
Every ticket redeemed for this game will earn \$\$ for Tri-State MS Association.

How do you get these tickets? It’s easy!

Call the TSMSA Office, and we can drop them in the mail to you!

Or stop by any of the following businesses to pick up tickets:

**Romain Crosspointe, Pet Food Centers, Schulthesis Insurance, Wayne’s Appliances,
Lucas Oil Centers- East & West, all ONB Evansville locations,
and The Rug Gallery of Newburgh!**

Do you know a company that would like to help give them out or offer to their employees?
Call the TSMSA office 812-423-5943 and provide us the contact information, and we will
make arrangements with them for **FREE tickets!**

Remember, the more FREE tickets we have given out and redeemed on,
Sunday, August 28th at 12:35 p.m., the more \$\$\$ we earn!
Let’s cheer for the Evansville Otters and “Strike Out MS” in a fun way!

Info: “Facebook.com/TriStateMSA” or “Facebook.com/StrikeOutMSNewburgh”

Upcoming Educational Program

Bristol-Myers Squibb has scheduled the following educational dinner program:

Date: August 18th, Thursday

Time: Registration 5:30 p.m.; Dinner 6:00 p.m. CST

Location: Moonlight Bar-B-Q, Owensboro, KY

Subject: “Learn About ZEPOSIA from an MS Expert”

Speaker: Dr. Daniel Becker, Assistant Professor of Neurology, John Hopkins School of
Medicine, Baltimore, MD

RSVP: 1-502-727-4709