



TRI-STATE  
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS  
ASSOCIATION

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[www.tristatems.org](http://www.tristatems.org)

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## **January 2024 Newsletter**

**Offering support, care, and hope...*right here at home!***  
**The mission of the Tri-State Multiple Sclerosis Association is to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with MS and their families in Southern IN, Southern IL & Western KY**

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Several of the Support Group leaders are working on starting back meetings in their areas. Give them a call if you are interested in talking with someone or maybe getting together.

Terry Hasty - Tell City - 812- 686-8183 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month.

**Next mtg. - 1/16/24 at Twilight Towers, Tell City at 11am.**

Fran Neal - Washington - 812-259-1565

**3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the Month at Ghost House in Washington at 10 am.**

Cheryl Walker - Henderson - 270- 823-4752

Susan Reynolds - Owensboro - 812-228-6100

TSMSA \*\*January 24<sup>th</sup>, MS Chair Yoga at Noon, TSMSA office. **See details below**

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### **Sunday, January 14, 2024 TSMSA Family Get Together - Gattitown at 4pm**

Start off 2024 by joining us and other families in the tri-state living with MS.

Tri-State MS Association will underwrite the cost of the meal for a MS individual and their family (those living in your household) or a MS individual and one guest.

**Must RSVP by January 10, 812-423-5943 / 1-866-514-4312.**

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### **20% 20% 20% 20% PRIME TIME GIVES BACK TO TSMSA 20% 20% 20% 20%**

On Sunday, January 28, 2024 Prime Time Pub and Grill will be **donating 20%** of your purchase back to TSMSA at all 3 of their locations. 10am-9pm.

**Prime Time Newburgh, 8177 W. Bell Oaks Dr. Newburgh**

**Prime Sports, 4944 Old SR 261, Suite 9, Newburgh**

**Prime Time North, 12301 US-41 Evansville**

All you have to do is mention TSMSA to your server!

## **Adhering to Your Disease Modifying Therapy in the New Year**

**Susan M. Reynolds RN, MSCN**

The most important thing for a patient with MS is to find the right Disease Modifying Therapy and stay with the medication. Staying on your disease modifying therapy maximizes your chances of doing well in the future. There are many resources available to a patient who is taking a DMT. Each drug company that sells a DMT has support programs available to help patients who are taking the medicine they make. Each support program has nurses available by telephone to advise MS patients on problems with their DMT's. They can help you manage injection site reactions and side effects of the medications.

Despite the fact that early treatment for MS is vital, only 60% of patient with Relapsing Remitting MS are using DMT's. According to NARCOMs patient registry study data, an average of 50% of MS patients will discontinue using their DMT's.

A high level of adherence to disease-modifying therapies (DMTs) is associated with a significant, 25% lower risk of moderate or severe relapses in previously untreated people with MS compared with those failing to adhere to therapy, according to a study of real-world data in Italy.

The Italian study shows that high adherence was defined as having access to the medication for at least 80% of days in a given period of time, while non-adherence was having access for fewer than 60% of days. Findings show that there is a need to select a first disease-modifying therapy that aligns not only with patients' MS severity and stage of disease, but also with their preferences and expectations, so that adherence is as high as possible.

The study, "Impact of adherence to disease-modifying drugs in Multiple Sclerosis: A study on Italian real-world data," was published in the journal *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders*.

Treating depression improves adherence to DMT's. Studies have shown that patients who are depressed do not do very well in adhering to their DMT's. MS patients should be monitored for depression. Family members and MS patients taking DMT's should report signs and symptoms of depression to their neurologist. Family support is very important to the patient with MS, especially if there are cognitive issues. The family should be included in any education done about the DMT's with permission of the MS patient. Social support is very important to help the MS patient stay on their DMT.

Realistic expectations play a big part in adherence to a DMT. It is important that each patient understands that the DMT's usually do not make you feel better, they may make you feel worse at first and often you can't tell whether or not they are working. The differences can only be seen with long term use of the DMT's. Patients who stay on the DMT's long term typically do quite well. These patients will have less disability and longer periods without disease flare-ups.

In the Italian study an additional analysis looking only at patients with at least 90 days or 180 days of follow-up found a weak association between DMT adherence and relapses — suggesting that adherence is particularly important during a treatment’s starting period. Over time, “the protective effect of high adherence seemed to be attenuated; suggesting that adherence to [disease-modifying medications] was particularly protective in the early stages of treatment”.

The expected adherence to treatment should be carefully addressed by clinicians and MS patients when making the important choice of which disease-modifying therapy to start treatment with,” the team concluded.

If you are not insured or are underinsured there are patient assistance programs to help you pay for a DMT. All of the drug companies have patient assistance plans to help you cover the cost of your therapy. Keep in mind that the application process for some of these assistance programs can be very slow. If your insurance is changing or you may lose your insurance please apply to the patient assistance plan without delay. This may prevent a gap in coverage of your Disease Modifying Therapy.



## **MS CHAIR YOGA IS COMING TO TSMSA OFFICE!**

Delanie Lawrence is one our very own who has lived with RRMS for 5 years and will be the instructor. She is a Certified Yoga Instructor, Health and Wellness Coach, and a Licensed Massage Therapist.

Chair Yoga has many benefits for people living with MS such as manage fatigue, reduce spasticity, improve balance and relieve stress. Chair Yoga offers short and simple practice that you can adapt to meet your current needs.

This class will be offered FREE to individuals living with MS.

**LAST THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH**

12PM (NOON) to 1PM AT THE TSMSA OFFICE.

**First class starts Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 2024.**

Wear comfortable stretchy clothing.

Call 812-423-5943 or 1-866-514-4312 to RSVP

This is also a great opportunity to connect with other! PLEASE JOIN US!

## DONATED EQUIPMENT

Contact the TSMSA office, 812-423-5943 or [director@tristatems.org](mailto:director@tristatems.org), if you are in need of a hydraulic system for a scooter. Scooter not included. Brand: 1800 BRUNO ASL250HTP

Pick-up arrangement will need to be coordinated.

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## Get Help with Free Tax Assistance

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provides tax assistance to anyone, free of charge, with a focus on taxpayers who are over 50 and have low to moderate income. Tax-Aide volunteers are located nationwide, and are trained and IRS-certified every year to make sure they know about and understand the latest changes and additions to the tax code. Visit AARP's website- [https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp\\_taxaide/](https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/)

**Tax-Aide locator will launch in mid-January and sites will open early February 2024.**

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## Free Smoke Alarms

The Red Cross has a **Free Smoke Alarm** program!

They will furnish and arrange to come install them for you.

Contact your local Red Cross office for details.

**Evansville** 812-471-7200    **Owensboro** 270-683-2438

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## Catholic Charities offers the Neighbor to Neighbor program



A free faith-based life-skills-education program to help families move toward self-sufficiency. The program teaches goal-setting for finance and health, and other life-skills. Upon successful completion, participants earn assistance with rent, utilities or other appropriate expenses.

**Call Catholic Charities at 812-423-5456 today for information or to sign up for the program. Classes starting February 2024!**

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## Starting the New Year with Gratitude

*"Joy is really the simplest form of gratitude." –Karl Barth*

We want to start 2024 by expressing joy and gratitude for the kindness shown by each person who has supported us through the years.

Our hope for you this year is good health and peace.

**Thank you for your continued support.**