



Six ways to lead a brain-healthy lifestyle

Having a healthy brain that functions well is important for people with multiple sclerosis. Here are six positive steps you can take to keep your brain as healthy as possible, whatever your MS diagnosis.



**Keep as active
as you can**



**Keep your weight
under control**



**Keep your
mind active**



Avoid smoking



**Watch how much
you drink**



**Continue taking
other medicines your
doctor has prescribed**

1. Keep as active as you can

Higher levels of aerobic fitness are associated with faster information processing and preserved brain tissue volume.¹ This suggests that being as active as possible may help to preserve brain health in people with MS.

2. Keep your weight under control

Obesity is associated with higher numbers of MS lesions (areas of intensive damage) than maintaining a healthy weight.²



3. Keep your mind active

Education, reading, hobbies and artistic or creative pastimes help to protect against cognitive problems in MS when pursued over a lifetime.³⁻⁷

4. Avoid smoking

Cigarette smoking is associated with decreased brain volume in people with MS,² as well as with higher relapse rates,⁸ increased disability progression,^{8,9} more cognitive problems¹⁰ and reduced survival¹¹ compared with not smoking.

5. Watch how much you drink

Unsafe levels of alcohol are associated with reduced survival in people with MS.¹¹

6. Continue taking other medicines your doctor has prescribed

If you have other diseases, be responsible for monitoring and managing them, including taking any prescribed medications. Conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease and diabetes can worsen the MS disease course.

For more information about why having a healthy brain is important for people with MS, visit www.msbrainhealth.org.

References

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