

multiple news

Multiple Sclerosis Auckland Magazine

March 2019 | Issue 43

inside

MS and diet

plus...

recognising an
MS relapse

have a healthy pregnancy

are you getting the

most out of home life?

meet the new team members

and more...

ms.

Multiple Sclerosis
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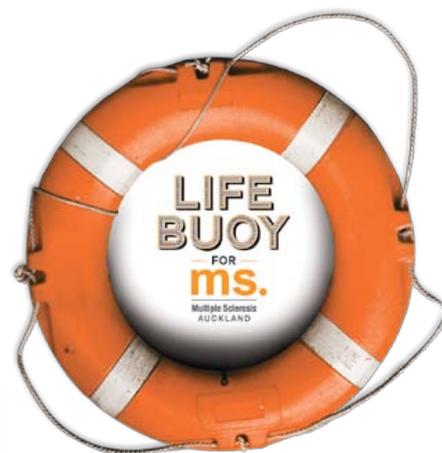
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MS & diet



Sunday 5th May
Life Buoy for MS!



our people.

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a few words from Ingrid.

Our General Manager

Our first magazine for 2019 is packed full of information, news, stories and inspiring people. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I have enjoyed pulling it together.

The main feature of our first edition is Diet. I'm excited to see the growth in the number of Doctors embracing lifestyle medicine, both in New Zealand and internationally. As Dr Craig writes "Food is paramount". What we put into our mouth impacts every cell of our body. For over 7 years I have enjoyed a plant based diet. It's something my husband, Paul, and I, after extensive research, decided to switch to in response to dealing with his heart condition and diabetes (he has an uncommon type of diabetes, which is more like Type 1 with most people quickly becoming insulin dependent). In spite of the evidence doctors were sceptical that diet would have any impact and he was told he would be on insulin within the year. Seven years later and he is still not on insulin, although he does continue to take some tablets.

For me a plant based diet is now second nature and I absolutely love it! We eat well and certainly don't feel deprived of anything. In fact I eat much better now than ever and have a much wider variety of wholesome

delicious foods in my diet. For dinner last night we had the recipe that's featured on page 23. It was quick and easy to make with enough leftovers for lunches.

I love the personal stories that people share with us - the wedding anniversaries, the challenges and the victories that living with MS gives us.

Sadly this will be the last magazine with our South Auckland Field Worker, Dianne. Dianne has been with us for nearly 11 years and will be truly missed by many, many people. We are working hard to find a replacement for Dianne, which is proving to be rather difficult. This is a time of much change, and as part of that we are looking at changing the title of MS Field Worker to MS Community Educator. It may take some getting used to but we feel that the title better embraces the work these lovely people are doing in the community.

We also welcome Luminita and Liz to our team! They are settling in well and are enjoying their new roles. We are all so happy to have them with us!

I'm always on the look out for stories. If you have one you would like to share please get in touch. I would love to hear from you.

fundraisers.

Jan and Roger opened up their garden for the Heroic Garden Festival. This is a fundraiser for Hospice however they were happy for Jan and Roger to sell some plants with 90 % of the proceeds going to MS Auckland and the other 10% of Hospice. Thank you Jan and Roger and thank you Hospice!



You can now support MS every time you purchase a Zeosoft product on line. Up to 40% of the sale will go to support MS community services.

www.zeosoft.co.nz
www.magicmud.co.nz

NOTE: Be sure to put in MS into the promotion/coupon box as the organisation you support when you make your purchase so we can track the sale.



Thank you to everyone who has been purchasing items!

events for your calendar.

March /
April / May

Upcoming events

Friday 15th March

Wellness Workshop "*Being the best you can be*"

The Occupational Therapist team at Physio Rehab Group present a workshop that will cover topics that include energy conservation, prioritising meaningful activities, memory aids and adapting daily tasks.

A collection of equipment companies will display ADL (aids to daily living) equipment.

Everyone is welcome
10:30 – 12 noon

Remuera Baptist Church, 641 Remuera Road
\$10/person (includes a morning tea)

Please RSVP to info@msakl.org.nz or telephone
09 845 5921.

Tuesday 9th April

MS Auckland AGM

7:00pm – 9:00pm at the Remuera Club
27 – 33 Ohinerau Street, Remuera

Please join us and hear about the developments of the future planning work of the MS Committee. Honorary Life Memberships will be awarded.

We will also be electing the new Committee for 2019. If you are interested in joining the Committee please contact Ingrid at 09 845 5921 for a nomination form. We are always on the look out for more people!

Our special guest speaker is MS Nurse Fiona d'Young. Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP to info@msakl.org.nz or telephone
09 845 5921.

Sunday 5th May Life Buoy for MS.

Our very popular fundraising event for the year is back again!

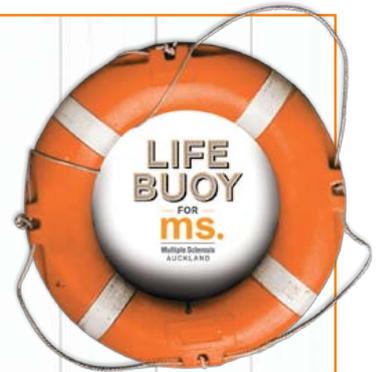
Once again we will be having a lunch and charitable auction at the Royal NZ Yacht Squadron at the beautiful Westhaven Marina.

Our very special guest this year is Jennifer Ward-Lealand. We are so happy to have Scotty 'Sumo' Stevenson back again this year as our MC. Our auctioneer is Martin Cooper from Harcourts Cooper & Co, who are also the primary sponsors of this popular event.

Many wonderful items will be up for auction, including trips, weekend excursions, dinners, art, memorabilia and many more items. Pascoes have also very kindly donated an 18ct White Gold Diamond Ring valued at \$5,199 which will be pledged and won by one very lucky guest.

Tickets are only \$85/person or \$850 for a table of ten. Seats are limited so be in quick!

E-mail events@msakl.org.nz or phone Liz on 09 845 5921 to book your tickets today!



MS Auckland office is located at
5 The Strand, Takapuna

Office Hours
Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm

Phone number: 09 845 5921

e-mail addresses:
Ingrid@msakl.org.nz
Mark@msakl.org.nz

info@msakl.org.nz

Kirsty@msakl.org.nz
Becky@msakl.org.nz

welcome Liz to our team.

We feel honoured to have Liz Callinan join our team. Liz replaces Kirsty who left at the end of January to live and work in the UK. Already after her first week with us Liz feels like one of the family. A big welcome to Liz!

Liz writes:

As I write this I am coming to the end of Week 1 as the new Projects Coordinator for MS Auckland and feel very honoured to be working with such a great Society, and Support team.

I have previously worked in the not-for-profit sector as well as in support services and event management for the education sector, and in a past life I was even a Park Ranger! Needless to say I love the outdoors, particularly anything to do with supporting the health of our oceans – you'll often find me swimming in it, sailing on it, or diving under it!

I am just as committed to supporting the MS community by helping to heighten awareness, support the services and raise funds for those affected by Multiple Sclerosis. I am intent on helping to make a difference and very much look forward to meeting many more amazing people throughout the MS community.

Here's to many more weeks and years!

*Ka kite ano
Liz*



and welcome Luminita!

Luminita joined the team in January this year. She has taken over for both Diane Hampton, our long-term Field Worker on the North Shore, and Catherine Glover, who came in to cover the Central Auckland region when Carol retired.

There are certainly a number of changes happening in our office. While we are always sad to see our wonderful and talented team members moving on, there is some excitement in having new people join us.

Originally from Romania, Luminita has been in NZ since 2003. She received a Bachelor of Engineering in 1995, but her love for working alongside people saw her change careers and gaining a National Certificate in Mental Health after coming to Auckland. Previous to joining us she was a Tenancy and Wellbeing Advisor for the Auckland Council.

Contact Luminita on 021 959 187, or through the office on 09 845 5921 ext 222, or by e-mail luminita@msakl.org.nz.

Luminita tells us a little bit about herself:

I am a mother, I am a wife and I am a communism survivor. I see freedom as important as good health. Like everyone else, I appreciate every sunrise and I am grateful for the beauty of life. I don't like uniforms and uniformity. And what makes me identify with people with MS is resilience. Someone said "adversity builds character". Someone else said "adversity reveals character". I agree with both and I am pleasantly surprised with my resilience: I persevere and not just blindly. I treasure achievements big and small and learn from mistakes.

I have been here less than two months, but I have already started to see how much strength there is in the human nature. I am here to walk alongside you in your journey, to learn from you, to cherish good moments and overcome adversities. And together we are going to walk with joy, gratitude and grace.

volunteer profile

By Becky Tucker

Celia, a True Gem!

I had a delightful catch up with our volunteer Celia Snedden the other day, Celia has been volunteering for MS Auckland for the past 8 years, helping us out with hydrotherapy, Street Appeal and other fundraising events. Only having met Celia just a few times in the office, (always very friendly and quick to smile) I was not fully aware of the incredible work she has done for MS Auckland and advocacy for MS!

The metaphor of 'grabbing life by the horns' comes to mind when talking to Celia, a born organiser who gets things done! This trait could possibly run through the family, Celia is one of 4, having 2 brothers and a sister. Tom was an Olympic sailor and Rick a Paralympic and both have amazing sailing CVs. Richard who is a two-time America's Cup winner was diagnosed with MS in 1997 whilst on board with TeamNZ as a strategist.

It is more often than you may think that a family member reaches out to MS Auckland, sometimes before the person with MS. Celia helped Richard through tricky times when his symptoms started to worsen. During this time, Celia encouraged Richard to get involved with the MS Auckland Society and to make the most of the services we offer, which Celia says looking back *"Introducing Richard to MS Auckland was the best thing, as Richard was reluctant to join and wanted his independence. Our Field Worker understood our situation and was a tremendous help to the both of us"*.



*Life Buoy 2019 Volunteer Committee
Back row: Joan, Lorraine and Christina
Front row: Raewyn and Celia*



Celia with her brother Richard during the 2016 Rio Paralympics

Celia would come along with Richard to our weekly hydrotherapy classes and pop in the pool to help others, this gave Richard the initial motivation to get involved with the society and being such a 'water baby' Richard soon became a regular at classes, loving the time in the water and the social time afterwards.

Richard's MS diagnosis, didn't stop his sailing career, as they say one door closes and another opens, the 2016 Rio Paralympics. Wow, what a ride this must have been! Celia was heavily involved with the campaign from 2012, helping manage and fundraise, whilst at the same time advocating for MS. Tom their brother was also helping as part of the management and coaching team, which just gives you an idea of what a generous family this must be. Our Ambassadors Joan and Lorraine Street were an enormous support along with the Auckland sailing community. During this campaign a lot of friends and contacts were made and many lessons learnt, so to have Celia's expertise on board with our fundraising events is simply priceless. Thank you!

We are very lucky to have once again amazing help for our Life Buoy event on the 5th May at the Royal Squadron Yacht Club. Celia is one of 5 volunteers making this very important fundraising event happen. Thank you, Celia, Lorraine, Raewyn, Joan and Christina for your hard work, generosity and support of people living with MS.



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Photo Credit: George Andrews

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DMT = disease modifying therapy.

TECFIDERA (dimethyl fumarate) 120mg and 240mg capsules are a Prescription Medicine for patients with relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis. TECFIDERA[®] has risks and benefits. For product information check Consumer Medicine Information on www.medsafe.govt.nz. Ask your doctor if TECFIDERA is right for you. Take strictly as directed. If symptoms persist or you have side effects see your doctor. TECFIDERA is funded medicine – a pharmacy charge and Special Authority criteria will apply. Normal doctors charges apply. Biogen, Auckland.

References: 1. Data on file, Biogen. 2. Desai A et al. *Eur J Pharm Med Res* 2016; 3(5): 197–205.
3. TECFIDERA (dimethyl fumarate) Data Sheet, 2 May 2017.

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from the MS nurses.

How To Recognise an MS Relapse

People frequently ask us "how do I know if these symptoms I am experiencing are a relapse"?

The concept of MS relapse or flare up is fine in theory and by definition is "the presence of new symptoms or recurrence of previous symptoms for greater than 48hrs in the absence of infection". However in reality it can be far from straight forward! Is it a relapse or flare up of old symptoms? The tool below we hope is useful in helping you recognize a relapse...

Having an infection can cause your body temperature to rise, which can cause a short term return of your old symptoms. This is known as a 'pseudo' relapse and soon after the infection clears up and your body temperature is back to normal (this may take a few days) the symptoms should resolve. The same effect can happen during hot showers, exercise or simply being in a hot environment- like this extremely hot summer. Cooling down in these circumstances should resolve the symptom very quickly.

Important things to ask yourself:

Is this a new symptom or something I have experienced before?



Fiona and Nazila

If it's an old symptom, do I have any signs of an infection? e.g. Urinary symptoms I don't normally have- frequency, urgency or pain on urination. Toothache? Open wound?

If you think you have an infection, book an appointment to see your GP to get this looked at as soon as possible.

If your GP is ever unsure about how to manage your symptoms or suspect you may be having a relapse they have the option to call the on-call neurologist at Auckland Hospital for acute advice.

If you are not sure your symptoms are indicative of an ms relapse, please contact us or your Field Worker via email or phone to ask. We won't always be able to clarify and or confirm this without asking you to see your GP or to see the neurological team but we can provide reassurance and advice on what to do next.

The MS Nurse Auckland Healthpoint website has a GP relapse management section. Information on steroid dose and on-call neurology number are part of the pathway so directing your GP to the site may help to streamline your consultation. <http://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/neurology/auckland-dhb-multiple-sclerosis-nursing-team/>

***Fiona d'Young and Nazila Samadi
Multiple Sclerosis Nurse Specialists
Auckland City Hospital***

***E-mail – msnurse@adhb.govt.nz
Phone – 09307 4949 ext. 25885#***

surviving the fog!

Tips for managing “brain fog”

Written by Andrea Kortas-Ray

If you are living with MS, chances are that you will have days or moments when your brain is feeling a little ‘foggy.’ Maybe you can’t quite remember the word you want to say, you say the wrong word or jumble up your sentences. Perhaps you can’t remember what you did yesterday or even what you did earlier that day and you start to do silly things without even noticing. It’s no indication of your intelligence, but it doesn’t stop you from feeling ‘silly’ at the time! It’s your brain telling you that it’s had enough and needs a rest. After all, your brain does have to work much harder than other people, to send nerve signals to and from your body, and once it reaches its capacity, the ‘fog’ hits!

But we all have lives that we need to continue on with and we can’t always hide in a cocoon away from people and responsibilities, so here are some tips and strategies for getting through ‘the fog’ while interacting with people around us and continuing on with things that need to be done.

Understanding:

- Explain to people that you are experiencing brain fog so that they understand and don’t get offended when you forget something or get your words ‘muddled.’
- Be kind to yourself...it’s ok to forget things; your brain is working extra hard to get those nerve signals to and from your body!

Organise:

- Make to-do lists on your phone or paper (E.g. post-it notes) so that you don’t have to hold information in your head. Write things down as soon as you can! If you can’t write or type, try dictating on your phone’s ‘voice memos’ or a Dictaphone.

Tip: Try to keep your lists in one place!

- Set phone alarms/reminders for anything and everything that you need to remember!
- Keep all appointments and important events on a single calendar on your wall or in your phone (or both!) that you will see every day. Make a habit of checking the calendar when you get up each morning and writing things on it as soon as you can, rather than leaving it until later, because you will likely forget!
- Use a pill organiser if you are someone who forgets whether or not you’ve taken your daily tablet(s)....

and if you forget to check your pill organiser, set alarms to remind you! Blister packs from the pharmacy are also helpful.

- Put up signs on the wall to remind you to turn off dangerous appliances such as ovens, stoves, hair straighteners, etc. Don’t light candles if you are likely to forget to blow them out. Try LED ones instead.

Recollecting:

- If you have trouble remembering what you have done each day, try keeping a journal/diary or writing down tasks that you have achieved or things that you have done in a day. Sometimes it is nice to see what you have achieved, rather than thinking about what you haven’t done.

Routine:

- Form a daily routine for all of your daily tasks and try to stick to it. When you are in a routine, you are more likely to remember things.
- Give a family member the responsibility of reminding you about important things that you are likely to forget.
- If you’re working or doing a task that requires concentration, take regular 5-10 minute breaks every 30-60 minutes, depending on what works for you. Taking a break at 10-to-the-hour, every hour is a good routine to stick to.
- During breaks, do something that allows your brain to rest, with minimal to no sensory input or social contact. For example:
 - Go for a walk
 - Have a nap
 - Just close your eyes
 - Meditate
 - Listen to some calming music
 - Sit or lie down somewhere quiet

Verbal strategies:

- Say what you are doing out loud, as you are doing it (E.g. “Putting phone in bag,” “Putting mail on table,” “Putting keys in the fridge.....what, wait a minute!”) – See how it draws your conscious attention to what you are doing to prevent yourself from doing ‘silly’ things!
- If you just can’t think of the word you want to say, try the following:
 - Gesture more

- Carry a little notepad or your phone with you and write the first letter of the word you're trying to remember
- Describe the thing you are trying to name
- Draw the thing you are trying to name
- Think of synonyms for the word

Sometimes just seeing it visually is enough to trigger the memory of the word

Taking care of your health:

- Check if you are deficient in specific vitamins and minerals (such as iron and B12) and supplement accordingly (with approval from your doctor). Being low in important vitamins and minerals can contribute to fatigue and brain fog.
- Follow a healthy diet that works for you as this may help to improve your concentration and give you more energy. Talk to a nutritionist or a dietitian about diet changes that might work for you.
- Practise fatigue management strategies to prevent or reduce brain fog. For fatigue management strategies talk to your Field Worker. You may also want to download the 'MS Energise' app for iPhone.

Our Field Workers



Dianne
South Auckland
Contact 021 845 903



Andrea
West Auckland & Rodney
Contact 021 959 189



Luminita
North Shore and
Central Auckland
Contact 021 959 187



Dianne's farewell.

The 4th of April this year will be a momentous day for my husband and me. We have decided to retire.

I had to get used to the word retirement and even now I'm not sure that I will fully retire. We have decided not to call it retirement but to re-focus on our years ahead by doing some travelling, refocusing on the big families we both have, trying new hobbies and sports, and enjoying life!

Retirement sounds so old and I can't quite believe that we have arrived! So refocusing it is!

After nearly eleven years working as your Field Worker in the South and East Auckland, I feel it is time. We are in the process of packing up but have decided to be tourists in Auckland for a few extra months without having the 40 hour working week getting in our way. We will then be relocating to our home town of Napier.

I started working at MS Auckland in July 2008 and over the years I have seen many changes. However the core principle of supporting people with MS has not changed.

It has been a privilege to be involved with you, my clients and your families, your friends and in some cases, your employers. I feel that I have got to know some of you very well. We have shared many challenges along the way and I will miss you all.

To the colleagues I've met during my time with MS Auckland, thank you for your support, and for being a listening ear. I hope that I've been able to return the favour.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

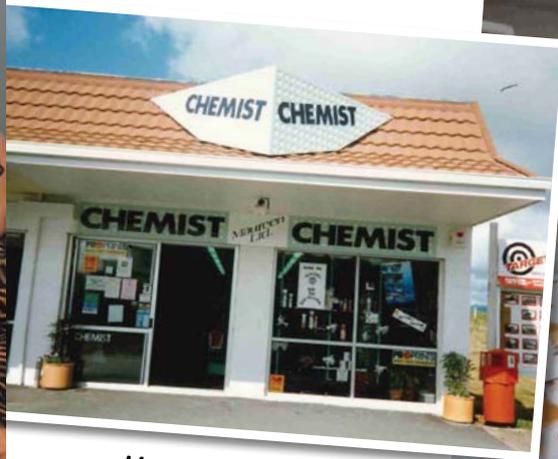
Cheers,
Dianne

full on to full stop!

Written by Maureen Wood



Maureen and Peter



Maurens chemist



My life stopped at 47 and started again at 67.

I was an extremely active person, thriving on high stress and always pushing too much into my life. In 1990 my 4 children were teenagers, so I set up and opened a pharmacy at Papamoa East Beach. It was called Chemist Maureen Ltd. It was all go until 1994 when I was diagnosed with MS.

I sold the pharmacy to change my lifestyle. For 7 years I took Beta Interferon but gradually my MS continued to progress until the point where I purchased a mobility scooter.

Peter and I were growing avocados on a lifestyle block at Pahoia, north of Tauranga. We decided to sell and move to Auckland where our family had settled.

Despite my disability I have always tried to carry on doing what I used to do. I enjoyed being at the beach and swimming, so I searched and imported a lounge on wheels which floats in the water (called a Tiralo, made in France). I have loved it and spend hours in the water with our grandchildren.

Haematological Stem Cell Treatment (HSCT)

I had studied everything I could about HSCT and decided it was the "closest to a cure" procedure that was available right now and that would be in my lifetime. I realised I was past the age to qualify for treatment in Singapore, Moscow or Mexico. I was also aware that I would not have the 'miraculous' improvements of younger people with lower EDSS scores (EDSS stands for Expanded Disability Status Scale and is a method of quantifying disability in multiple sclerosis and monitoring changes

in the level of disability over time). Fortunately, I have an Oncologist friend at HCG Hospital in Bangalore who convinced me to go there.

In 2016 my husband, Peter, and I took a cruise from Singapore to Goa and stopped off at Bangalore to see the hospital and meet the medical team. Everything looked good, so I booked in.

On the way back from Goa I went into hospital and initially underwent a week of extensive testing. The results showed I was an excellent candidate for HSCT. I then underwent the treatment for 4 weeks and stayed an extra 2 weeks to have stem cells from my bone marrow inserted directly into my spinal fluid.

Today after 2 years with my new stronger immune system I feel better and people say that I look much better. I have had no new MS symptoms and no UTI's (urinary tract infections) and have much more energy since the treatment. My right leg which previously had been a completely 'dead leg' for 8 years (AUT physios could not get any response with electrical stimulation) can now move and I can wriggle my toes. Nervous tissue takes a long time to recover so I hope for more improvements slowly. (And where are things at with the remyelinating drug research that we heard about in Research Day 2015?)

I am very glad I went ahead with HSCT and my only regret is that I didn't do it earlier. I hope New Zealand will soon follow Canada, UK and Europe in making it available to MS patients. I will work towards making that happen.

hydrotherapy.

Hydrotherapy is up and running for 2019 and it is thriving! If you haven't tried it yet then talk to Dianne, Andrea or Luminita to find out more about it and see if it is something for you.

Unfortunately this year we will not be running the programme at Westwave Aquatics. This was a difficult decision to make as it was where the Hydrotherapy classes first began many years ago. This year Westwave will be undergoing quite an extensive maintenance and upgrade programme. While we could have stayed on it would have meant large periods of closure and being moved around to different areas of the pool which may not be suitable for us. It is difficult to run a regular programme under these conditions. We see this as a temporary closure and will be looking forward to coming back in 2020.

In the meantime we hope that people will consider heading out to the Millennium Pool. Attendance there is quite low and could use more people. Please remember, before attending any pool for the first time it is very important to make contact with the contact team member listed for each pool. Please don't just show up unannounced for the first time.

Your payment entitles you to attend as many sessions per week as you would like. It is only the first time at any one pool that you must first contact the staff member listed for the pool below.

The Hydrotherapy sessions are heavily subsidised, however there is a cost to attend.

\$120 – for the full year (or an automatic payment of \$10/month can be set up)

\$30 – per quarter

Liz, our new Projects Coordinator, will be handling all queries regarding the pool. You can contact her at the office on 09 845 5921 or on liz@msakl.org.nz.

Becky looks after the pool volunteer helpers. If you know of someone who may be interested in helping out please contact Becky at the office or on becky@msakl.org.nz.

2019 Weekly Sessions

Tuesday

Lloyd Elsmore Pool

Sir Lloyd Drive
Pakuranga

11.00am - 12.00 noon

Contact:

Dianne Bartlett

09 845 5921 Ext 220
dianne@msakl.org.nz

Wednesday

Millennium Pool

17 Antares Place
Rosedale

10.30am - 11.30am

Contact:

Luminita Apostol

09 845 5921 ext 222
luminita@msakl.org.nz

Wednesday

Manurewa Leisure

Sykes Road
Manurewa

11.00am - 12.00 noon

Contact:

Dianne Bartlett

09 845 5921 Ext 220
dianne@msakl.org.nz

Thursday

Epsom Girls

Silver Road
Epsom

10.30am - 11.30am

Contact:

Luminita Apostol

09 845 5921 ext 222
luminita@msakl.org.nz

Saturday

Diocesan Girls

Clyde Street
Epsom

10.00am - 11.00am

Contact:

Luminita Apostol

09 845 5921 ext 222
luminita@msakl.org.nz



MS and diet - what you should know.

The following article was written by Dr Mark Craig, FRNZCGP MRCGP MRCS MBChB Bsc.

The links for many of the studies referred to below are not included in this article. For more information on the studies or on making lifestyle changes to your diet he can be contacted at mark@truesouthmedical.co.nz.

Summary

There is very good evidence from many studies that MS can be put into remission, or at least the rate of progression slowed, with the right nutrition. All foods are a biologically active collection of molecules which will either reduce or cause inflammation in the body within 2-4 hours of eating them, depending on what they are. There are also thousands of patients who have put their MS into remission by eating a diet consisting of the foods which have been shown to reduce the incidence and severity of MS. The foods which reduce MS rates and progression are from the groups fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes (pulses such as beans, peas chickpeas, lentils and split peas). Those that have been found to be associated with increases MS rates are fats (especially saturated fat) such as is found in dairy produce, animal meats including red and processed meats (sausage, bacon, cured meats, cold cuts and canned fish), and also likely eggs and poultry by extrapolation and case studies.

The studies

Genes are thought to account for 25% of the risk of developing MS (Ebhers 1986) so MS is more related to environmental factors than genes (Kuusisto 2008). The good news therefore is that your genes are not your fate and the greatest part may be amenable to lifestyle factors. Exercise, stress reduction, avoiding or minimising harmful things like environmental and food toxins, smoking, alcohol and excess caffeine are important, **but food is paramount**.

Observational studies of diet association with MS

The first observations were that poorer people who ate less fat and more vegetable and starchy foods had lower MS rates. Then, in the war it was noted that with the reduction in animal product foods eaten, MS rates dropped significantly. (Swank 1952 et al)

Interventional studies

Interventional studies are where you change people's diets and see the effect over time. The best known by far is the incredible study done by Professor Roy Swank of Oregon University which lasted **34 years**, starting in 1952. The only reason you can do a study lasting this long is because the diet works **really** well. It is one of the most impressive studies in medicine and it's a travesty that we aren't taught about it at medical school, amongst many other topics about nutrition that are omitted.

Prof Swank asked 144 patients to follow a very low fat diet and analysed them in 2 groups at intervals according to how much fat they ate. The lower fat eating group had greatly reduced rates of progression of MS compared with the higher fat eating group. In fact in the least disabled group analysed, the 'mild' MS patients, there was no significant worsening of their MS over all those 34 years. He also caught up with some people after 50 years and the results were the same. I almost fell off my chair when I first read this. It leads to the solution for MS - a very low fat diet is your best chance, and a very good chance at that, of beating this disease.

There have been many other studies showing similar indications that the more animal product foods (they all have saturated fat, even if 'lean'), and the higher amounts of plant based foods, especially fruits and vegetables, the lower the MS relapse rates.

Prof George Jelinek runs the Overcoming MS organisation, which many people with MS will have heard of, and following this programme has led many people into slowing or putting their MS into remission. It is noted that this diet includes fish and seafood, which themselves contain significant amounts of fats, which may worsen MS.

There are many people who go further and adopt a fully whole foods plant based (WFPB or 'healthy vegan') diet and obtain as good if not better results. MRI results have shown a regress of sclerotic (scarring) lesions on brain and spinal cord with this diet.

So how could the diet work?

Suggestions from studies include:

- decreased fat inside red blood cells and brain
- decreased oxidative stress from the saturated fats
- higher levels of antioxidants
- decreased clotting of capillaries around myelin cells and change in the microbiome (healthy gut bugs).

Can you do it?

What I can say is that these dietary lifestyle changes are very doable. I have had many case stories from patients who have put their MS into remission or slowed progression. There are website support groups, meetup potluck groups, facebook group supports, and menu and meal plans to help make changing to this diet much easier. After a short time, people find it easy to do in general.

Other benefits of the diet

I work in lifestyle and nutrition medicine and the evidence for a very low fat, plant based diet for all our chronic diseases is overwhelmingly convincing. It has been shown to prevent and reverse heart and stroke disease, our biggest diseases and causes of death (Ornish 1998, Esselstyn 2014), prevent and slow progression of some cancers, and even reverse prostate cancer (Ornish 2005) and reverse diabetes (Barnard 2009). Many other auto-immune conditions (MS is designated as one) also respond to the diet, including Rheumatoid Arthritis, Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Autoimmune Thyroid Disease. I have many case stories from patients who have done this and plan to publish them.

The reason eating this way is beneficial in treating and preventing these diseases is that we evolved eating mainly food which came from plants. Nearly all our anatomy, physiology and biochemistry is evolved to eat and digest and run on these foods.



So what do you eat?

An example, is porridge or muesli for breakfast, a big hearty salad with lots of complex carbohydrates containing foods like potatoes, or beans or brown rice, fruits for desserts, and bean, lentil or chickpea stews in the evening, with lots of vegetables, also filling soups, and food from overseas such as Asian (Thai veggie or tofu curry), Mexican (veggie bean burritos) and Italian veggie pizza (no cheese). You can make it as gourmet or as basic as you like and still eat healthily on the diet. The Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine has a free 21 day vegan kickstart to help you get started. You can find this on their website: <https://www.pcrm.org/>

The good news is you can eat as much as you like so it's not a restrictive 'diet' diet, as the food on a whole food plant based diet is relatively low in calories. It is also nutritionally complete, more so than a 'standard western diet', with the exception of a cheap B12 tablet weekly if fully plant based, as we used to get this through our fruit and vegetables and drinking water, but don't now with our more hygienic environment.

Following the diet doesn't mean you shouldn't take the medications for MS if you feel they are beneficial. However, I would say if you are taking the medications then you should certainly be following the diet.

If you'd like to get in touch to discuss this or how to follow this nutrition plan, please contact me at mark@truesouthmedical.co.nz

Some Helpful references:

<https://nutritionfacts.org/video/treating-multiple-sclerosis-with-the-swank-ms-diet/>

<https://www.wholefoodsplantbasedhealth.com.au/medical-conditions/auto-immune-diseases/multiple-sclerosis/> (Central web page with links to studies and classes)

A new documentary on this by a Doctor with MS - <https://www.codebluedoc.com>

<https://nutritionstudies.org/scared-school-boy-ms-doctor-nutrition/> (From a research dietitian with MS)

Case study – 45 year old female

I was diagnosed in 2001 and my main symptoms were numbness, pins and needles in my hands and feet, extreme fatigue, balance issues and incontinence.

I attended the OMS retreat in Australia twice, (2004 and 2014) and after the 2014 retreat, I decided to commit to the OMS programme. This included a diet of no meat or dairy, and minimal saturated fats, although fish and sea food were acceptable. This diet, whilst initially seemed fairly restrictive is now a way of life for me and I adhere to it 100%

Since being on the programme, I have stopped taking the medication I had been on for 12 years and have been drug free for 4 years. My MS has improved tremendously and I am fitter, healthier, happier and practically symptom free, since being on the OMS programme.

overcoming MS.

Meet the Auckland OMS Ambassador

Overcoming MS (OMS) is a global non-profit and registered charity in the UK, USA, and Australia. Their mission is 'to educate, support and empower the global MS community in evidence-based lifestyle and medication choices that improve health outcomes'. Dr George Jelinek who was diagnosed with MS in 1999, developed the OMS programme. Many people will be familiar with his books on Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis or perhaps attended one of his retreats in Auckland or in Australia.

Roy Bartlett has recently become an OMS Ambassador for Auckland. I had the pleasure of talking to him about his new role.

Ingrid: Welcome Roy, what is your role as an OMS Ambassador?

Roy: Thank you. My primary role as an OMS Ambassador is to let people with MS know the OMS 7-stage Recovery Program exists. The vision of Overcoming MS, its staff, and the 72 Ambassadors spread across 18 countries worldwide is: 'That everyone in the world is aware of the OMS Program'.

Ingrid: So how do you intend to achieve creating this awareness in Auckland?

Roy: By talking to people one person at a time just as I am with you today about the program and the opportunity it provides people with MS in taking the first steps to building a better and healthier life.

Ingrid: What is the message you communicate? What do you say to the people?

Roy: I provide everyone with the same information about how the program is based on 1000 + pieces of research from the top 5,000 medical journals in the world; offer them an easy to read 12-page booklet that shows the evidence behind the research; plus a second booklet which lets them know what the 7-steps of the OMS Recovery Program are.

Ingrid: So what happens next?

Roy: Once a person has decided for themselves that they would like to follow the OMS recovery program they can either get back in contact with me, or go directly to the OMS website for information. They can also support and connect with other local OMSers, through the OMS Ambassadors Program.



Roy meets up with Stephanie, a member of the OMS circle

Ingrid: What briefly is the OMS Ambassadors Program?

Roy: The OMS Ambassadors Program is a support network for people who are new to OMS, are not yet aware of OMS, or already on the OMS program but looking to become a part of a community that will ensure their success on the 7-step OMS Recovery Program. The OMS Ambassadors Program centres on the OMS Circle that I have created here in Auckland. As OMS Ambassador I lead the program in Auckland and I am also a member of the OMS Circle.

Ingrid: What is an OMS Circle?

Roy: An OMS Circle is what we call a local community of people who are making positive changes to their diets and lifestyles to achieve a better and healthier life with MS. They meet regularly and answer each other's questions and act as a source of support and encouragement for each other, in good times and not-so-good times. The Circle is also an open forum where people can share their stories.

Ingrid: Thank you Roy. How can people contact you if they want further information?

Roy: By calling 021 262 3123, emailing me at roybartlett.hhc@gmail.com, or through the OMS website www.overcomingms.org

To find out more about OMS go to their website - <https://overcomingms.org/>

Professor George Jelinek's book 'Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis' – The evidence-based 7 step recovery program, is available in the MS Auckland Library. Contact Becky at 09 845 5921 if you would like to borrow a copy, or talk to your Field Worker about getting a copy.

MS Auckland acknowledges Air New Zealand.

Leeanne Langridge, GM Cabin Crew, was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by MS Auckland President, Neil Woodhams, on behalf of their customer facing teams and the continued help and support Air NZ, and in particular the cabin crew, give to people with MS, especially those facing physical challenges.

Leeanne was keen to learn more about MS and how it affects people and shared with us the work they have been doing in working with their cabin crews to 'go beyond customer connections' using the expertise of Simon Sinek.

A huge thanks to Air NZ for working to make sure that people with MS can continue to travel and can enjoy a good flight experience!



Neil and Leanne

Fran launches her first book.

'I Can Until I Can't... Managing Multiple Sclerosis My Way'



Fran presenting her book

On Sunday the 24th of February at the St Helier's Church, Fran Watts presented to 140 people her very first book. The idea of writing a book of her MS journey came to her from a dear friend just about 8 months earlier.

Once the seed was planted Fran couldn't let go of it and soon afterwards she started writing. The book was completed in just 6 months! Fran writes, "If I inspire just one person with MS to overcome their fear or anxiety about this disease and lead a happy and healthy life, then my book will have been a success".

MS Auckland has purchased two books for their library, however if you would like your own copy please e-mail Fran on franwatts60@gmail.com. The book costs \$30.

We will be organising another MS Auckland book launch and signing as well over the next few months for another opportunity to have the book signed by the author! Our heartiest congratulations, Fran, and many thanks for sharing your story with the world!

have a healthy pregnancy with MS

RESEARCH

The following article was taken directly from webmd - <https://www.webmd.com/multiple-sclerosis/healthy-pregnancy-with-ms#2>



The MS Nurses at Auckland hospital have put together a team and together they are working on a Pregnancy Project to understand the needs of women and families before, during and after pregnancy. Their aim is to have appropriate resources in place to support the identified needs. If you would like more information on pregnancy with MS please talk to the MS Nurses or your Field Worker.

If you want to start a family, having multiple sclerosis (MS) doesn't have to stop you. It doesn't keep you from getting pregnant or hurt your unborn baby. Odds are your pregnancy and delivery will be just like women without MS.

Still, moms-to-be with MS face unique challenges. Plan ahead and learn what to do before, during, and after pregnancy to make your next 9 months a little easier.

Before You Get Pregnant

Talk to your doctor. Let her know you want to have a baby. If your MS is under control, you'll probably get a green light.

Some MS drugs, like glatiramer acetate (Copaxone), teriflunomide (Aubagio), and interferons, aren't safe

during pregnancy. You'll need to stop taking them at least 1 month before you start trying.

Time it right. Just like any woman, you might not get pregnant right away. To limit the time you're off your medicine, try to learn your "fertility window." That's the time of the month when you're most likely to conceive. You can buy an ovulation kit at the drugstore to help you figure it out. Your doctor can recommend other ways to help your timing, too.

Build a support team. MS can wear you out, and pregnancy can, too. Don't be afraid to ask family and friends to fix meals or help around the house so you can save your energy. Make sure your team is ready to pitch in after the baby comes, too.

While You're Pregnant

Expect some relief. You may get a break from your MS symptoms. That's because pregnancy naturally protects many women from new flares, especially after the first 3 months. So enjoy it! Focus on getting the right foods, exercise, and plenty of rest.

Watch out for urinary tract infections (UTIs). They are more common for pregnant women with MS. Drink lots of water,

and tell your doctor if you feel burning when you go to the bathroom or if your urine is cloudy or smelly. You may get monthly urine tests to check for UTIs. You also may have trouble with constipation. A stool softener can get things moving.

Prop yourself up. As you get bigger, your balance may be off. Use a cane or other walking aid so you don't fall. Prepare for your special delivery. Chances are you'll be able to give birth just like any other woman. If you can't push because of fatigue or muscle weakness, your doctor may use special tools to help you deliver naturally. Or you might need a C-section.

You might not know when labour starts if you have lost feeling in your pelvis. In that case, your doctor will watch you more closely during the last month. She may want to use drugs or other procedures to put you in labour. Medicines to block pain, including injections called epidurals, are safe for people with MS. If you want one, tell your doctor.

After Baby Comes Home

Be aware of flares. In the first 9 months after birth, up to 40% of women with MS will have a relapse. But a flare doesn't raise your risk of a long-term disability. If you had many flares before pregnancy, you may be more likely to

have one now. It may be a good idea to start taking your MS medicine right away to help stop one.

Think carefully about breastfeeding. If you go back on your meds, you won't be able to do it. The drugs could harm your baby through your milk. But if your doctor says it's OK to wait to take your medicine, breastfeed if you want to. It's perfectly safe for you and great for your little one.

Store the milk you pump in the fridge so your partner can tackle middle-of-the night feedings. You need your rest now more than ever. Don't feel guilty if you choose medication over breastfeeding. After all, your new addition needs a mom who can stay healthy.

Mind your mood. Women with MS have a higher risk of depression during pregnancy and especially right after they give birth. Call your doctor if you start to notice any symptoms, like feeling sad or hopeless. Your ob-gyn may also screen you for depression during a routine prenatal or postpartum visit. Your doctor can help treat your depression symptoms.

Will your baby grow up to have MS? It's a common concern for many parents-to-be. MS does have some genetic links, but the adult children of parents with the condition have a 96% chance they won't have it.

Sandie's gift in memory of her father.

Like many people who have included a gift in their Wills for MS Auckland, Sandie has been personally touched by MS. "Dad wasn't diagnosed with MS. It was called Creeping Paralysis then. Remember this was a long time ago – 1950's, in the UK. I feel it was MS because of the problems he had with his hands and the way he dragged his foot. Back then there was no support. My uncle made some special tools for dad so he could use a razor... use a knife and fork."

Sandie's dad passed away in 1954 when she was just 7. She remembers him as a loving man and still feels his presence. The bequest she has included in her Will for MS Auckland is both a tribute to her father and a desire to support people living with the daily challenges of MS – challenges she saw and lived with as a girl.



Sandie with her Mum and Dad

MS Auckland is blessed by the generosity of Sandie, and others like her, who contribute to the long-term sustainability of MS Auckland services. In an uncertain world, Sandie's bequest will help ensure that people with MS and their families will be supported with information and the practical care of our support team in the future.



Only think about your MS once daily

Relapsing multiple sclerosis may be there every morning, but that doesn't mean it has to always be on your mind.

With a treatment routine as simple as one pill a day, Gilenya can let you focus on the life you want.

**Ask your doctor
about Gilenya.**

🔍 **'Multiple Sclerosis NZ'**

Reference: 1. GILENYA Consumer Medicine Information available at www.medsafe.govt.nz

Gilenya® (fingolimod) 0.5mg is a prescription medicine available as capsules for the treatment of patients with relapsing multiple sclerosis to reduce the frequency of relapses and to delay the progression of disability. Gilenya is a fully funded medicine under Special Authority Criteria. Normal doctor visit fees and prescription charges apply. Out-patient monitoring will be necessary for administering the first dose. You should not take Gilenya if you have certain heart conditions or if you are taking some medicines that affect heart rate - check with your doctor. You should avoid becoming pregnant while taking Gilenya and for two months after you stop taking it. It is important not to stop taking this medicine without your doctor's advice. Tell your doctor straight away, if you believe your MS is getting worse after you have stopped treatment with Gilenya, because it could be serious. Gilenya has risks and benefits. Cautions are infections, vaccinations, visual disturbances, decrease in heart rate, signs of liver disorders, sudden onset of severe headache, nausea, and vomiting, or any abnormal skin growths or changes (e.g. pearly nodules, patches, open sores or unusual moles). Talk to your doctor right away if you experience any of these, or experience worsening of your MS symptoms. Side effects can include headache, liver enzyme increased, diarrhoea, cough, influenza, sinusitis, and back pain. Refer to consumer medicine information at the website www.medsafe.govt.nz for full details. Ask your doctor if Gilenya is right for you. Use strictly as directed. If symptoms continue or you need further information or you have side effects see your doctor. Gilenya is the registered trademark of Novartis AG. Novartis New Zealand Ltd, Auckland. NZ-00501 February 2019 TAPS MR5588 essence NV9064A MS

 **NOVARTIS**

Model is for illustrative purposes only

support groups.

MS Support Groups are free to attend and a great way to meet other people living in your area who also have MS or who live with people with MS. They are open to anyone with MS and their partner, parent, friend, sibling or child.

Below is a list of 15 of our support groups. Most meet on week days, but there are 3 Saturday groups, one for men only, one in Mt Wellington and one on the North Shore. If there is not a group here that meets your needs then talk to one of our Community team (Field Workers) about exploring the possibility of setting another one up.

When going to a group for the first time be sure to let the contact person listed below know you are coming. They will then look out for you and make sure you are welcomed to the group.

Location	Contact	Date/ Time
South / East Auckland		
Beachlands Support Group Pepper Jacks Café	Dianne Bartlett 021 845 903	Fridays 11.30am
Pukekohe Café Group Different Venues	Dianne Bartlett 021 845 903	First Thursday / Month 11.30am
Botany Café Group Robert Harris Café (Botany Town Centre)	Dianne Bartlett 021 845 903	Third Thursday / Month 11.30am
Manukau Café Group Friendship House (Manukau)	Dianne Bartlett 021 845 903	Last Tuesday / Month 10.30am
Men's Group Robert Harris Café (Botany Town Centre)	Dianne Bartlett 021 845 903	Last Saturday of each Month 10.00am
Central		
Mt Wellington Café Group Coffee Club on Lunn Avenue	Luminita Apostol 021 959 187	Second Saturday / Month 11.00am
Stonefields Café Group Stonebake Café (Lunn Avenue, Mt Wellington)	Luminita Apostol 021 959 187	Third Wednesday / Month 10.30am
Onehunga Group Urban Verge Cafe (653 Manukau Rd, Royal Oak)	Luminita Apostol 021 959 187	Third Tuesday / Month 10.30am
West Auckland & Rodney		
Kumeu Café Group Different Venues	Andrea Kortas-Ray 021 959 189	First Tuesday / Month 10.30am
Henderson Garden Café Group Columbus Coffee Café (inside Mitre 10 Mega, 186 Lincoln Rd)	Andrea Kortas-Ray 021 959 189	First Thursday / Month 11.00am
New Lynn Café Group Columbus Coffee Café (inside Mitre 10 Mega, New Lynn)	Andrea Kortas-Ray 021 959 189	Second Tuesday / Month 10.30am
North Café Groupies Kings Plant Barn (Silverdale)	Andrea Kortas-Ray 021 959 189	Third Wednesday / Month 10.30am
North Auckland		
Mayfield Coffee Morning Kings Plant Barn (1 Forrest Hill Road, Milford)	Luminita Apostol 021 959 187	First Thursday / Month 10.30am
Shore Lunch Group Palmer's Planet Café (cnr Hugh Green Drive/Greville Rd, Albany)	Luminita Apostol 021 959 187	Last Wednesday / Bimonthly 12.00 noon
North Shore Café Group Columbus Café (Smale Farm, 74 Taharoto Rd, Takapuna)	Luminita Apostol 021 959 187	First Saturday / Month 12.30pm

Eva's experience with neuro connection.

Written by Andrea Kortas-Ray



Eva Gamsby was an avid ballroom dancer, living in England in 1993, when she first noticed symptoms of MS. Her feet weren't quite doing what she wanted them to do while dancing. It wasn't until she moved to New Zealand in 1995, that she was officially diagnosed. After a series of stressful events in her life, she noticed that her left side wasn't working properly, she was limping and her symptoms were showing more. But Eva has never let her MS define her life and prefers to refer to herself as being "affected by MS" rather than "having MS."

About 7 years ago, Eva was talking to a fellow person with MS, who told her about Neuro Connection (formerly known as the Integrated Neurological Rehabilitation Foundation, or the INRF) and she decided to give it a go since going to a normal gym was too difficult with an electric wheelchair. Eva loves driving, describing herself as a "motorhead," so loves to drive herself to her classes each week in her powerchair, rain or shine!

At first Eva was uncertain about how it would help her, but she noticed right from the beginning that no matter how tired she was, she would always feel more energised after a class. She believes that it helps the hemispheres of her brain to work together, as all of the instructions given are slow and controlled, and every area of the body is focused on separately. For example, in one session they will work on different areas of

the body at a time, starting with the upper body and moving to the lower body. The Conductive Educators keep a close eye on everyone during the classes whilst giving the instructions and are there to help every step of the way. Eva says they are very encouraging and supportive. A highlight for Eva is having the opportunity to use the 'Cogy', a wheelchair with pedals that one of the staff members has imported from her home country of Japan, for use at Neuro Connection.

The main benefit Eva has experienced from attending Conductive Education classes is increased flexibility. She certainly notices during the Christmas closure period that she becomes stiffer and less flexible. She is sure that she would not be as flexible as she is today, had she not attended these classes for the last 7 years and this helps her to effectively manage any decline resulting from MS.

Eva recommends that other people give Conductive Education classes a go as a great, very affordable form of movement and exercise, but also emphasises the importance of being holistic in managing your health. Conductive Education is just one piece of the puzzle. Eva is a trained homeopath and has been treating herself with homeopathy, vitamins and minerals for many years and knows the importance of "finding your inner being" through daily meditation. Through doing all of this on a regular basis, Eva feels more peaceful and relaxed than she ever has before.

***For more on Neuro Connection go to
www.neuroconnection.org.nz***



Neil Woodhams hands over the machine to Inna Chochina

MOTOMed moving.

On the 21st of February the MOTOMed Movement Therapy Unit, which has been housed for many years at Westwave gym, was officially welcomed to its new home at Neuro Connection in Henderson.

The MOTOMed will be free to use to anyone with MS. It is suggested that you phone first to make sure it is available. You can phone them on 09 836 6830. If it is your first time using the machine it is advisable that you bring someone with you to help you get set up, or make sure that one of the staff members is available to advise you.

Inna Chochina, General Manager of Neuro Connection, hopes it will be well-utilised. If it gets too busy they will look at setting up a booking system.

For more on the MOTOMed machine please go www.motomed.com.

recipe.

Cozy Butternut, Sweet Potato, and Red Lentil Stew

Vegan, gluten-free, nut-free, refined sugar-free, soy-free

The following recipe was taken from the Oh She Glows website - <https://ohsheglows.com/>

Butternut squash, red lentils, and sweet potato are wrapped in a lightly sweet and creamy coconut and tomato broth accented with spicy notes of turmeric, cumin, chili powder, cayenne, and garlic. Apple cider vinegar provides a tangy brightness to bring everything together. This stew tastes better the next day once the flavours have had a chance to mingle.



Yield 11 cups (2.75 quarts) | Prep time 20 Minutes | Cook time 30 Minutes

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons (30 mL) extra-virgin olive oil	3 tablespoons (45 mL) tomato paste
1 medium onion, diced (about 2 cups/280 g)	1 ½ teaspoons ground turmeric
3 to 4 large garlic cloves, minced	1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin
3 cups (400 g) peeled, seeded, and diced butternut squash*	½ teaspoon chili powder
1 large sweet potato (450 g), peeled and diced (2 ½ cups)*	¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, or more if you like heat
3 cups (750 mL) low-sodium vegetable broth	Fine sea salt, to taste (I use 1 ½ teaspoons pink salt)
1 (14-ounce/398 mL) can diced tomatoes	Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 (14-ounce/398 mL) can light coconut milk	3 teaspoons (15 mL) apple cider vinegar, or to taste
½ cup (100 g) dried red lentils, rinsed**	1 bunch chard, stemmed and finely chopped***

Directions:

1. To a large pot, add the oil, onion, and garlic. Stir to combine. Increase the heat to medium and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, until the onion is softened.
2. Add the squash and sweet potato and stir to combine. Add a pinch of salt and continue sautéing for a few minutes longer.
3. Add the broth, diced tomatoes (with juices), coconut milk, lentils, tomato paste, turmeric, cumin, chili powder, cayenne, salt, and pepper. (If you are spice-shy, feel free to add half the amount to start and increase from there after cooking, to taste.) Stir well to combine.
4. Increase heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium, stir again, and simmer uncovered for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the squash and potato are fork-tender. Reduce the heat if necessary.
5. Add the apple cider vinegar to taste. Adjust the other seasonings if desired.
6. Optional step: Using a handheld immersion blender, blend the stew for only 2 to 3 seconds (any more and you'll blend too much of the veggies). This thickens the broth.
7. Stir in the chard, and cook for another couple minutes until the greens are wilted.
8. Scoop some cooked rice onto the bottom of a bowl and then ladle the stew overtop. Garnish with minced cilantro or parsley and a good dusting of garlic and chili powder, if desired.
9. Leftovers will keep in the fridge for up to 5 days, and they freeze beautifully too.

Tips:

* Make sure to dice the squash and potato very small (about the size of almonds), as this will expedite cooking.

** You can swap the red lentils for 1 (14-ounce/398 mL) can chickpeas (drained and rinsed).

*** You can swap the chard for 5 ounces of baby spinach or a bunch of kale (stemmed). I recommend chopping the greens into small bite-size pieces for easier eating.



Get on with life,
we'll see you
in 6 months.

OCREVUS only needs to be given every six months after the first dose.¹ If you're one of the 4000 New Zealanders affected by MS, ask your doctor if OCREVUS is right for you.

OCREVUS[®]
ocrelizumab



Living your life your way with MS

1. Ocrevus (ocrelizumab) Consumer Medicine Information February 2018 <http://medsafe.govt.nz/consumers/educational-material.asp>

Ocrevus is **not funded** by PHARMAC for relapsing or primary progressive multiple sclerosis. You will need to pay the full cost of this medicine. A prescription charge and normal doctor's fees may apply.

Ocrevus[®] (ocrelizumab), 300mg vial, is a Prescription Medicine used to treat relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (RMS) and primary progressive multiple sclerosis (PPMS). **Do not use Ocrevus if:** you have had an allergic reaction to Ocrevus or any of the ingredients. **Tell your doctor if:** you have an infection, or a history of a recurring or long-term infection such as hepatitis B; you are taking or have previously taken medicines which may affect your immune system, such as other medicines for MS; you intend to have or have had immunisation with any vaccine; you are allergic to any other medicines or any other substances such as foods, preservatives or dyes; you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant; you are breast feeding or plan to breast feed. **Tell your doctor immediately or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency Centre if you notice any of the following;** swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat with difficulty breathing; swelling of other parts of your body; shortness of breath, wheezing or trouble breathing; skin problems including rash, itchiness or hives; fever, flushing or chills; cough, throat irritation or pain; feeling tired; headache; dizziness or light headedness; feeling sick (nausea); fast heartbeat. **Tell your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you notice any of the following common side effects:** signs of an infection such as fever or chills, cold sore, shingles or genital sores; stuffy nose or chest; thick mucus in the nose, throat or chest; persistent cough; difficulty sleeping (insomnia); diarrhoea, vomiting and/or stomach cramps (gastroenteritis). **Ocrevus** has risks and benefits. Ask your doctor if Ocrevus is right for you. Use strictly as directed. If symptoms continue or you have side effects, see your healthcare professional. For further information on Ocrevus, please talk to your health professional or visit www.medsafe.govt.nz for Ocrevus Consumer Medicine Information.

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Neil and Erin celebrate their golden wedding anniversary.



I met up with Neil and Erin in their beautiful home on Herald Island to talk about the lovely occasion that they celebrated on the 1st of February.

“50 years!” I said to Erin, “That’s quite something to celebrate. What do you call the 50th wedding anniversary?”

“A long-time!” replied Erin. And indeed it is a long time and not an occasion that many people get to see these days.

Erin was just about to turn 20 and Neil was just 23 when they said their wedding vows in 1969. They had met on a blind date. Erin had just returned from being overseas with AFS America. Her friend was going to a party on the Wellington waterfront and asked Erin to join them to make 4. The other person was Neil and, well the rest is history.

They went on to have four sons. Mark was born in 1970 and Jonathan in 1972. They were living in Rotorua at the time. They then moved to Wellington where Simon was born in 1975 and Tom in 1979.

Finances were tight at first, as it is with most young people. For their wedding though they hired Ronald Woolf photographer. They were also furnishing a house and a double bed, bought with the help of Erin’s father, cost a bit more than they had expected. As a result they weren’t able to buy any wedding photos.

At their 40th wedding anniversary, Neil surprised Erin with the photos. Ronald Woolf photography had kept all the negatives over the years and was able to go into their archives and find them!

They eventually moved to Auckland where Neil worked in Banking and Finance and Erin worked as a Family Court co-ordinator in Waitakere.

In 1994 Erin was diagnosed with MS. MRIs were just coming into New Zealand and Erin’s diagnosis was



Erin and Neil

made with an MRI. Erin recalls having a first episode two years before she was diagnosed and the terrible fatigue that she suffered with. When diagnosed she was told not to join the MS Society as it was full of old ladies in wheelchairs!

Fortunately Erin didn’t listen to this advice and in 1995 she joined the MS Committee. She was still very active and in 1998 went to Nepal to do a trek at Kathmandu.

In 2002 Neil also joined the MS Auckland Committee. By this time Erin was just starting to use a wheelchair occasionally and a year later was using the chair all the time.

In 2007 Neil became president of MS Auckland and he has been heavily involved with MS ever since. He is currently also the vice-President of MSNZ and a Trustee of the New Zealand MS Research Trust.

Erin and Neil have 10 grandchildren (three living in Japan and seven in Auckland).

Happy 50th wedding anniversary, Erin and Neil!

are you getting the most out of your home life?

The article below was written by one of the Occupational Therapists at Physio Rehab Group.

Wellness. Independence. What do these words mean to you? Maybe for you it's about prioritising the meaningful things in your life when fatigue kicks in? For many, it's about navigating the small challenges within activities of daily life - equipped with strategies and supports.

Wellness embodies the importance of 'being the best that you can be' regardless of the obstacles. It stems from the idea that the characteristics of 'doing and being' are therapeutic tools. When we prioritise the things we 'do' as meaningful, it creates a platform for better participation and wellbeing outcomes.

The occupational therapists at Physio Rehab Group are here to help you achieve better health and wellbeing through 'occupation' – an agent of change that is the key to wellness. We're all about focusing on your strengths (the daily activities you can do) and then building on these existing abilities with the right resources and techniques to remain as independent as possible.

To get you started, here are a few simple tips to make home life easier;

- When peeling a potato, try wrapping it in a tea towel to make it safer and more stable. Or try gathering supplies before you start cooking (or beginning any task) before you get fatigued with moving around the kitchen
- Grocery shop online
- Try using long handled 'gripping pliers' to avoid bending or over reaching. Maybe you would benefit from weighted utensils or therapeutic cutlery.
- Hiking poles are also a great way to stay balanced when walking.
- Try using a 'perching stool' in the kitchen or bathroom equipment (like a shower stool) to save your energy.
- Use wheels to move items (shopping cart or laundry basket). Or what about using a long handled shoe horn or sock aid to get on those fancy dress shoes?
- When working on your computer, try a 'wrist rest'.
- Fine motor things can be a real hassle... we can help you work on hand function to enable you to open a toothpaste tube or that jar of peanut butter you've been craving.



- Try to prioritise what tasks need to be completed and manage your fatigue by 'pacing' and stopping for lots of breaks. Try sequencing specific movements with stops and be sure to use both hands to lift or push items
- Maybe falling is something you're concerned about? Try installing railings in your home, wear non-slip shoes, reduce the amount of rugs and make sure those hallways are well lit.

We recognise that each person needs to maintain and fulfil roles and tasks in order to be productive and get the most out of life. This is about helping you overcome the demands of daily life (that conflict with MS) through identifying your goals and tailoring strategies towards your daily routine and activities.

To find out more, e-mail neuro@physiorehabgroup.co.nz and ask to be put in touch with your local Occupational Therapist, or phone 09 524 0633.

our supporters.

MS Auckland is grateful to all organisations, families and individuals who support our work.

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Special thanks also to our wonderful volunteers who give us their time, expertise and support.

remember us with a gift in your Will.

Most gifts are made by ordinary hardworking people who would like to give lasting support to causes that are important in their lives. A gift to MS Auckland in your Will can be as much or as little as you want.

If you would like further information on writing a Will or leaving a gift to Multiple Sclerosis Auckland, or for a confidential no-obligation chat about how your gift can make a difference, please contact Robyn or Mark in the office on 09 845 5921.



For more information visit www.msaki.org.nz

MORE THAN A DECADE TREATING RELAPSING-REMITTING MS¹



Talk to your neurologist to see
if TYSABRI[®] is suitable for you

TYSABRI (natalizumab) is a Prescription Medicine containing 300 mg of natalizumab in 15 mL solution for intravenous infusion. Approved Use: TYSABRI is used as monotherapy for the treatment of patients with relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (MS) to delay the progression of physical disability and to reduce the frequency of relapse. Do not take TYSABRI if you have any allergy to natalizumab or any ingredients listed in the Consumer Medicine Information, if you have a history of, or current, progressive multifocal leucoencephalopathy (PML), have suppressed immune function or are taking medicines that modify the activity of the immune system. Like all medicines, TYSABRI has risks and benefits. Ask your doctor if TYSABRI is right for you. Use strictly as directed. If your symptoms continue or you have side effects, see your doctor, MS nurse or other health professional. Side Effects: urinary tract infection, nasopharyngitis, urticaria, headache, dizziness, vomiting, nausea, arthralgia, rigors, pyrexia, fatigue, hypersensitivity, liver injury. Further Information: For further information see the TYSABRI Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) available at www.medsafe.govt.nz or by calling 0800 852 289.

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References: 1. TYSABRI (natalizumab) Approved Data Sheet, March 2018. 2. Biogen Data on File.



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