

The Mind & Body Centre

(Clinic & Research Unit)



**The Management of
Multiple Sclerosis
by Natural Methods.**

*(Introduction - before you start
Part 1 - relief of symptoms
Part 2 - stabilisation/management
Part 3 - re-myelination/re-generation)*

**by
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**Introduction - before you start.
Part 1 - relief of symptoms.**

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The Management of Multiple Sclerosis by Natural Methods.

Introduction:

The M.S. Resource Booklet of The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (MS Society 1994) states that M.S. is a chronic disease of the central nervous system and that the symptoms experienced are caused by patches of de-myelination or scar tissue in the central nervous system and brain.

The booklet further states that it is not yet known what actually triggers off the process of M.S.

As the M.S. Society is the officially recognised body for the condition, the above can be taken as the officially held viewpoint of the conventional medical profession. Furthermore it follows that any treatment prescribed by practitioners of conventional medicine, who generally adhere to that viewpoint (often through pressure of work more than from a desire to support it implicitly), can only be a symptomatic approach to what is one of the most common neurological disorders in the northern hemisphere. M.S. presently affects about 2.5 million people world-wide and around 100,000 people in the U.K. alone.

To be fair to the M.S. Society, their resource booklet does say that although there are 100,000 people with M.S. in the U.K., it is as though there are 100,000 people with their own kind of M.S.

A valid reason for an holistic approach if ever there was one!

The U.K. Office of Health Economics has defined seven different types of M.S. but most experts agree on four main ones:-

Benign - Minimal disability although deterioration is still possible even after many years. Affects around 20% of sufferers.

Relapsing - Remitting - Most common form affecting 60% of total. Symptoms come and go in various parts of the body. Recovery is either complete or partial but there is usually a gradual worsening over time.

Chronic Progressive - This type affects about 10% of sufferers. There is a slow, steady worsening of symptoms with no clear attacks or remissions.

Rapidly Deteriorating or 'Galloping' - This most serious form affects about 10% and is the result of rapid de-myelination in the brain. Can be fatal in 5 - 10 years.

I have a sneaking suspicion that the course that symptoms take has more to do with the way in which the condition is perceived **as it relates to the individual**, and thence the way this is dealt with on an emotional as well as a practical level.

The symptoms may include:-

Double, blurred or loss of vision in one or both eyes.
 Tingling or a feeling of 'pins and needles'.
 Slurred speech.
 Difficulty in walking.
 Dragging either foot.
 Loss of coordination.
 Clumsiness.
 Loss of balance and a feeling of giddiness (vertigo).
 Numbness in the hands, feet or any part of the legs, arms or other parts of the body.
 Loss of sensation or 'distorted' sensation anywhere in the body.
 A feeling the body is made of cotton wool, jelly or rubber.
 Wanting to urinate badly or being unable to urinate.
 Pain.
 Tremors in the hands and arms, sometimes convulsive and uncontrollable.
 A feeling of having tight, itchy bands around the middle or lower limbs.
 Muscles feeling useless(spastic) or like jelly.
 A feeling like frostbite in the ends of fingers and toes.
 Feeling unnaturally tired and limp, particularly in hot and humid weather or surroundings.
 Having difficulty concentrating or remembering things.
 Feeling depressed for no discernible reason.

Having these symptoms is no more a 'guarantee' that you have MS than a lack of them guarantees you don't. Some are serious and others mild. It must be emphasised that MS remains a complex and puzzling condition which no one yet fully understands.

The treatments of choice from conventional western medicine are usually drugs to ameliorate symptoms. (Hereafter, I will refer to this type of medicine as 'industrialised medicine' because of its reliance on industrially produced drugs, elaborate and expensive diagnostic machinery, hi-tech surgical interventions and computerised diagnostic and prescriptive procedures).

None of these is intrinsically wrong, but any responsible medical system has to look for and treat root causes, as well as symptoms.

Possible Drug Therapy.

Steroids (eg ACTH) - anti-inflammatory drugs.

Anti-spasmodics (eg Cystrin) - which help bladder control.

Anti-cholinergics - to relieve muscle aches and stiffness.

Muscle relaxants (such as Lioresal or Dantrium).

Anti-depressants (eg Prothiaden or Prozac) and

Analgesics (painkillers) (anything from aspirin and paracetamol for mild pain, to opium based drugs like Temgesic, for severe pain).

Some of the latest drugs to find their way into the M.S. arena are:

Immuno-suppressants (like Sandimmun or Novantrone) and

Immuno-modulators (beta-interferon and copolymer-1).

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All these drugs have side effects

Steroids:

Immediate side effects include raised blood pressure, blood sugar and other chemical imbalances. Long term effects of continuous use are swelling ('moon face'), weight gain, unwanted hair, delayed wound healing, eye problems such as glaucoma and cataracts, impotence, ulcers, kidney stones, diabetes and osteoporosis.

Anti-spasmodics and anti-cholinergics:

Headache, nausea, fatigue, dry mouth, blurred vision, diarrhoea, flushing, constipation and irregular heartbeat.

Muscle relaxants:

Include drowsiness, slow reactions, varicose veins, nausea, reduced alertness, low blood pressure, muscle aches, lowered heart and breathing rate, visual disturbances and rash.

Anti-depressants:

Confusion, memory problems, delirium, disorientation, excessive sweating, sexual dysfunction, palpitations, drowsiness, rapid heartbeat, disturbed concentration, anxiety, insomnia, nausea, tremors, vomiting, diarrhoea, weight changes, convulsions, dizziness, headaches, dry mouth, fatigue, blurred vision, fever and allergic reactions.

Analgesics:

Some are addictive but, in cases of severe pain, may be necessary.

Immuno-suppressants & Immuno- modulators:

These are all experimental and still need much longer trials before they are released for prescription.

For further information see - **British National Formulary** published by British Medical Association/Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (ISSN 0260 - 535X)

If industrialised medicine can't offer a treatment of cause, we must look elsewhere - to more natural healing systems. These are sometimes called 'alternative' or 'complementary' medicine but we prefer to use the term 'natural' or 'traditional' medicine as they reflect philosophies which have always been central to the human situation.

One of the best guides to the management of M.S. by natural methods is "**Multiple Sclerosis - A Comprehensive Guide to Effective Treatment**" by Richard Thomas and published by Element Books (ISBN 1-85230-715-3)

This is a book we thoroughly recommend as it echoes the philosophies we hold in the approach to the treatment of, not just M.S. but all disease.

In this book, possible causes of M.S. are given as:-

- Heavy metal poisoning.
- Eating too many saturated fats.
- Low levels of essential fatty acids.
- Food allergies.
- Childhood infections.
- Carbon monoxide and environmental poisoning.
- Low level radiation.
- Prolonged use of the contraceptive pill.
- Severe emotional trauma/stress.
- Physical injury.
- Vaccinations.
- Overuse of antibiotics. (*Including the regular consumption of commercially reared meat)
*My addition
- Genetic predisposition.
- Climate and geography.

It would seem that a combination of these factors is probably the true picture and that an individual with a genetic predisposition, who lives in the “wrong” place and climate and whose childhood medical history and diet have compromised their immune status is then ‘tipped over the edge’ by a severe physical/emotional trauma, vaccination after effects and/or the inappropriate use of drugs or exposure to further poisoning (either environmental or ingested).

Before You Start.

- *Have yourself checked out for mercury poisoning.*

The most common cause of this is dental amalgam. Make sure you go to a dentist who knows what they are doing as the removal of amalgam fillings can release mercury vapour into the system, if done incorrectly.

Contact: Jack Levenson at the British Dental Society for Clinical Nutrition at 1, Welbeck House, 62, Welbeck Street, London W1M 7HB. Tel. (0171) 486 3127

Dr. Patrick Kingsley, the UK's leading expert on MS, states that out of 4,000 patients seen with this problem, only five didn't suffer with mercury poisoning.

- *Check for food allergies.*

The most common being gluten and dairy products. Others include tannin (tea), caffeine (tea, coffee, cola), citrus fruits and the solanaceous food group (potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, aubergines) and cocoa products.

Get tested with either the cytotoxic method or, much simpler and cheaper, applied kinesiology. (Make sure the practitioner has, not only experience, but also an understanding of the role of food allergy in MS).

If it transpires that you have an allergy/sensitivity to any food, it is essential that you take care how you deal with it. I have been working with allergies for around 12 years and it is not uncommon to see patients who have been diagnosed with, or have suspected, multiple food allergies to radically change their diet to accommodate this and end up nutritionally deficient.

Something else that can happen is a process known as "shunting". This is where the sensitivity is transferred to another food because the load on the person's immune system hasn't been attended to.

- *The Possible Role of Candida.*

Gerald Green, the herbalist and immunologist who has had much success with the treatment of MS, ulcerative colitis and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) amongst others, says "Candida is the key player in auto-immune disease" and ".....it's most common induced allergen is gluten, a substance that must be totally excluded in MS always."

Candida is best treated primarily with diet and supplementation. Gerald's booklet, "**Multiple Sclerosis - Beaten Against All The Odds**", outlines the methods in detail.

The naturopath, Leon Chaitow, gives a checklist in his book "**Candida Albicans - Could Yeast Be Your Problem?**" (Thorsons. ISBN 0-7225-1144-2).

He asks:-

- (i) "Have you ever taken a course of antibiotics for an infectious condition which lasted for either 8 weeks or longer, or for short periods 4 or more times in one year?"
- (ii) "Have you ever taken a course of antibiotics for the treatment of acne for a month or more continuously?"

(iii) "Have you ever had a course of steroid treatment such as prednisone, cortisone or ACTH?"

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(iv) "Have you ever taken contraceptive medication for a year or more?"

(v) "Have you ever been treated with immuno-suppressant drugs?"

(vi) "Have you been pregnant more than once?"

The candida implicated 'major symptom history' checklist reads as follows:

(i) "Have you in the past had recurrent or persistent cystitis, vaginitis or prostatitis?"

(ii) "Have you a history of endometriosis?"

(iii) "Have you had thrush (oral or vaginal) more than once?"

(iv) "Have you ever had athlete's foot or a fungal infection of the nails or skin?"

(v) "Are you severely affected by exposure to chemical fumes, perfumes, tobacco smoke etc? Are your symptoms worse after taking yeasty or sugary foods or drinks?"

(vi) "Do you suffer from a variety of allergies?"

(vii) "Do you commonly suffer from abdominal distention, 'bloating', diarrhoea, or constipation?"

(viii) "Do you suffer from PMS?"

(ix) "Do you suffer from depression, fatigue, lethargy, poor memory, feelings of unreality?"

(x) "Do you crave sweet foods, bread or alcohol?"

(xi) "Do you suffer from unaccountable muscle aches, tingling, numbness or burning?"

(xii) "Do you suffer from unaccountable aches and swelling in joints?"

(xiii) "Do you have vaginal discharge or irritation or menstrual cramp or pain?"

(xiv) "Do you have erratic vision or spots before the eyes?"

(xv) "Do you suffer from impotence or lack of sexual desire?"

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Chaitow then says:-

“If there are one or more positive answers to the first section and two or more in the second section, as well as some of the following, then candida is probably involved in your symptom causation”

Symptoms usually worse on damp days - persistent drowsiness - lack of co-ordination - headaches - mood swings - loss of balance - rashes - mucous in stools - belching and ‘wind’ - bad breath - dry mouth or throat - post nasal drip - nasal itch and/or congestion - nervous irritability - tightness in chest - ear sensitivity or fluid in ears - heartburn and indigestion.

I think that most of us would score pretty high on all these checklists, and this suggests that a first step to the successful management of MS could well be the management of candidiasis.

Logical 'Next-Step' Treatment with Natural Medicine

Together with the control of candida, the removal of amalgam fillings and the eradication of food allergies where necessary, we can use traditional/natural healing techniques either alone or in conjunction with conventional/industrial medicine, provided we aim to minimise medium to long term side effects of either system, and take care to avoid problematic interactions.

There are three levels at which traditional methods can be useful:-

- a) **Relief of symptoms.**
- b) **Stabilisation/management of the condition.**
- c) **Remyelination/creation of new neural pathways.** (This is, at the moment, largely experimental but is the most exciting area of research).

a) **Relief of Symptoms**

There is no reason we shouldn't treat symptomatically with traditional methods, as long as we ensure that we treat at a deeper, causative level at the same time.

The methods we consider suitable for symptomatic treatment are:-

(i) **Acupuncture**

In Chinese medicine, the main causes of MS are said to be:-

Invasion of external dampness.

Diet.

Shock.

Excessive sexual activity.

Although MS is not all that common in the Orient, acupuncture is one of the most effective forms of treatment for both symptomatic relief and stabilisation of the condition. (And probably to assist in the creation of new neural pathways too). Good acupuncture treatment always acts holistically, even when used for the relief of symptoms.

We have developed a very effective treatment programme here at our clinic and will make details available to your practitioner if requested.

(ii) **Meditation.**

One of the main aggravators of MS symptoms is stress, so any form of relaxation or meditation is of great benefit.

Transcendental Meditation (TM), is the best researched and most widely available form of meditation in the west and for a complete explanation of the theories and practice of TM, Peter Russell's book "**The TM Technique**", published by Routledge & Kegan Paul (ISBN 0-7100-8345-9), cannot be bettered.

TM instruction is available everywhere and the number of your local teacher is in the phone book under "Transcendental Meditation".

We produce our own audio cassette about the techniques of meditation for those of you who are unable, or who would prefer not to take formal classes.

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(iii) Oxygen Therapy.

There are several ways to use oxygen supplementation in MS management. Probably the best known of these is Hyperbaric Oxygen or HBO. This is a controversial treatment, mainly because the conventional medical profession can't find any definitive evidence for it's success. (strange, as it is a relatively 'hi-tech' procedure).

What we do know is that any way we can oxygenate the bloodstream will have a beneficial effect because, at the very least, it will provide a hostile environment for candida and other organisms (candida albicans is anaerobic - it only thrives in low oxygen environments - and this also applies to other harmful bacteria, viruses and fungi including colds and 'flu', the AIDS virus, and cancer cells).

We would suggest that there are more convenient and less time-consuming ways of creating an oxygen-rich environment such as 'ki' breathing and hydrogen peroxide.

We can provide a video of ki breathing exercises which you can follow at home.

(iv) Cannabis

A traditional medicine in many cultures and widely used here in the West until relatively recently.

It is analgesic, anti-inflammatory and sedative. Can help to relieve spasms, tremor, spasticity, bladder problems, pain and promote sleep.

It is also hypnotic, cataleptic (trance-inducing) and hallucinogenic and is, of course, illegal at the present time.

We recommend the book "**Marijuana - The Forbidden Medicine**" by Lester Grimspon & James B. Bakalar and published by Yale University Press (ISBN 0-300-05435-1), for a more in depth study.

We cannot provide cannabis!

That constitutes the first part of the three-part programme and when you have explored all the possibilities mentioned above and controlled your symptoms to a certain extent, you will be ready to move on to part two and establish your own Personal Management Plan.

Don't be impatient. It has taken me the best part of ten years to work out my own programme, largely because the methods we are using need time in which to coax the body back towards a state of health.