

Naturopathic Medicine Today

Fall 2004
Visit us at www.OAND.org

A magazine for
Canadians
interested
in the benefits of
Naturopathic
Medicine



Naturopathic Medicine and Addiction (part 2)



The Changing Face of **Multiple Sclerosis**

*A Medical Condition
Involved in the
Winter Blues*

OAND Ontario
Association of
Naturopathic
Doctors

The Changing Face of Multiple Sclerosis

by Teri Jaklin ND

As Ontarians we live in one of the international hotbeds of MS prevalence. Others who share this geographic distinction include the rest of our fine country (with the exception of Newfoundland), USA, and most of Europe. These countries have a few things in common: higher latitudes, lower exposure to natural sunlight in the winter months (therefore low vitamin D levels); high intake of dairy products (therefore higher saturated fat intake). These and many other diet, environmental, lifestyle, and genetic factors make MS an exceptionally complex condition. There is, however, no shortage of research addressing the many theories that create the varied faces of this condition. Unfortunately the unregulated immune system is the main theory focused on by our medical community, and it is this focus (in my humble opinion) that is changing the face of MS.

Today's treatment options are aggressive and extremely toxic. They address only one of a number of well-understood disease processes, while potentially aggravating others. People are encouraged to begin treatment as soon as possible for maximum results. The result of this therapeutic push is confusion and frustration for the individual – not to mention the guilt and fear about “not doing the right thing.” Is this aggressive approach necessary in every patient with MS?

It has been both my personal and clinical experience (as well as the experience of many NDs) that MS can be effectively managed – in many cases with symptoms being reversed and long-term outcomes optimized – with good naturopathic care.

People need to understand that there are treatment options, things that they can do that will promote excellent outcomes. One of the most rewarding things for me as a practitioner is to watch people play a significant role in their treatment programs. Individuals move from a place of fear to a place of trust, in themselves, their bodies, their practitioner etc. This is very empowering, and in an era where psychoneuroimmunology (the role the mind plays in good health) is well understood, also an important part of the treatment plan itself.



When we begin to talk naturopathic treatment, recall that according to naturopathic philosophy the body cannot be treated in isolation to every other aspect of the being. The mind and the body are intrinsically linked and health or disease in one will affect the other. The ND is also committed to treating the cause of disease, which in the case of autoimmunity (attacking the self) is definitely a long-term prospect. Here are some basic concepts to consider.

- There is no magic bullet (naturopathic or otherwise) that will make MS go away overnight – restoring good health – for example halting and/or reversing symptoms, takes patience, time, and work, but it can be done. MS is an unpredictable disease – no two patients manifest in exactly the same way.
- Educate yourself, beyond availing yourself of the latest marketing info from supplement or drug manufacturers. There is a good understanding right now of the main pathophysiology of MS – and knowing that is the first step to making the right treatment choices. (Don't fret, we'll discuss some of it here)
- While genetics play a small role in this disease, the impact of diet, lifestyle, and coping mechanisms play an even greater role, in fact they create the environment within which any genetic predisposition can manifest itself.
- Healing happens on so many levels it is naïve for you to think (and arrogant for any one health care professional to think) that one practitioner holds all the cards.
- Many, many drugs are prescribed for MS. The primary chemotherapeutics, then meds for inflammation, pain, spasm, sleep, depression, bladder control, laxatives etc etc etc. This provides an internal environment that is so toxic that it seriously compromises the body's ability restore good health.

What's going on in the MS body?

Multiple Sclerosis quite literally means “many scars.” It is a disorder where neurological damage is caused by an overactive, misdirected immune system. A by-product of an immune system gone amuck is chronic inflammation. In the case of MS, this then sets the stage for structural damage- the deterioration of the myelin sheath. The end result is scar tissue, or plaques forming on the myelin sheath that surrounds the axons of the nerves.

continued on page 6

continued from page 3

I recently had the privilege of speaking at a conference where the keynote speaker, a board certified neurologist, delivered a talk called "The Brain on Fire – The Role of Inflammation in Neurodegenerative Disease". The medical world now understands that chronic inflammation is at the root of most serious diseases. This is also the case in MS.

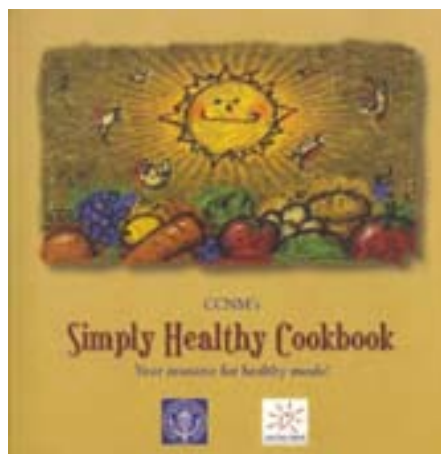
One of the most important causes of chronic inflammation is free radical damage in the body – specifically the brain. For some unknown reason, free radical activity in the body of a person with MS is vastly increased. The brain is a particularly pleasing destination for free radicals because it is a tissue with a very high fat content, just what the free radicals need to be quenched. To make matters worse, the body's inherent antioxidant defences in the brain are seriously compromised in MS – giving the free radicals free reign.

The final outcome of this rampant free radical activity in the brain is called lipid peroxidation. Lipid peroxidation causes direct damage to the fatty tissue that makes up the protective myelin covering on the nerves. Healthy myelin ensures that nerve signals travel properly to their destination. Interruption of nerve signal transmission leads to numbness, tingling, visual disturbances (optic neuritis), paralysis, and decreased function in an area of the body.

We also know that there is an unregulated immune response that is perpetuating the destruction of the myelin. How is this controlled? Diet, lifestyle and various supplements can help this, but absolutely essential is having a healthy gut. Your naturopathic doctor will help you with an in-depth gut restoration program.

Further, we now have a sound understanding that mitochondrial damage plays a key role in neurodegenerative disease like MS. The mitochondria of the cell produce our ATP or energy. Damage at this cellular level plays a role in the feeling of chronic fatigue that many MS patients experience.

continued on page 7



Oatmeal Pancakes

If you crave hot breakfasts as well as glowing health, try this nourishing, high-fibre spin on traditional pancakes. This nutritious recipe takes a little longer to prepare than store-bought pancake mix. But it's free of trans fat, chemicals and preservatives, and tastes better too!

1 cup	Large-flake organic oatmeal
½ cup	Whole wheat flour
½ cup	All-purpose flour, unbleached
¼ cup (optional)	Wheat germ or oat bran
2 tsp.	Baking powder, heaping
¼ cup	Sugar, scant (do not pack it in)
½ tsp.	Sea salt
¼ cup	Butter, melted (see Simply Healthy Cookbook for vegan alternatives)
1	Organic egg, large or extra-large
1 cup	Milk or milk substitute (such as almond milk)

- Put oatmeal in a blender or mini-chopper. Pulse for 5 – 10 seconds.
- Pour into a large bowl, and add remaining dry ingredients. Mix with a fork to blend.
- Melt butter in a medium-sized pot over low heat.
- In a small bowl, beat the egg with a whisk. Combine the egg with the milk and melted butter and stir together.
- Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients using a rubber spatula. The batter will look lumpy.
- Heat a large frying pan, adding enough butter to coat the surface.
- When the butter begins to bubble, drop the batter in by large spoonfuls, to form 3" diameter pancakes (adjust the size to your liking).
- Adjust the heat if necessary: If it is too high the butter will smoke, and if it is too low the pancakes won't cook.
- After approximately 60 seconds, bubbles will appear on the pancakes. Flip to cook

the other side. The second side takes only a few seconds to cook.

- Remove cooked pancakes, and continue cooking batter until you have enough pancakes.

Serve hot, with 100% pure maple syrup.
Makes 14 pancakes.

Apple Cake

Autumn is around the corner and apples are coming into season. But while summer hangs on for dear life, satisfy your craving for home-baked pie with an amazing apple cake that's every bit as scrumptious. And since it's free of hydrogenated oil, lard, white flour and added sugar, it's much healthier too!

2	Eggs
½ cup	Unrefined oil (organic coconut or canola is recommended)
¼ cup	Warm water or orange juice
	pinch Salt
1 tsp.	Vanilla
1 ½ cups	Spelt flour
6	Apples, peeled and sliced
3 Tbsp.	Apple butter
	Cinnamon to taste

- Mix together eggs, oil, water, salt vanilla, and flour to make a batter.
- In a separate bowl, combine apples, apple butter and cinnamon to taste.
- Pour batter into a glass dish and spread apple mixture over top of batter.
- Bake at 350 degrees F for approximately 50 minutes.

CCNM's **Simply Healthy Cookbook®**, conceived and executed at The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, provides the tools you need to get back to those basics and prepare meals that use wholesome foods and promote optimum health.

Complementing a unique collection of 175 tasty, nutritious recipes using whole foods, collected and approved by Tannis McLaren, ND, is a comprehensive guide to beans, grains, rice, flour, sweeteners, fats and oils.

Available exclusively at **Body Mind Science Resources for \$22.95.**
1255 Sheppard Avenue East
www.bmsresources.ca
416.502.2665

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book will be directed to the marketing and promotion of the Robert Schad Naturopathic Clinic, the teaching clinic of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine.

continued from page 6

Without intentionally confusing the matter further, there are also delicate structures inside the brain that are part of the endocrine system, the body's metabolic regulator. The endocrine system governs sleep, body temperature, stress response, energy and so on, so you can see that lesions in this area (which is not uncommon) could complicate the MS symptom picture even further.

Many pages could be spent discussing aspects of MS further, however as the length of this article is limited by my kind editor I would like to leave you with some guidelines that you can implement today to start you on the way to the long-term management of multiple sclerosis.

1) Diet is key in managing the inflammatory response. There are long-term, large-scale studies to support diet in managing the long-term progression of MS. If you want more info you can Google Roy Swank MD or Ashton Embry PhD – Dr. Swank is the pioneer in MS diet work and since his work we have learned so much more – which Dr. Embry brings together well. The basics of a good MS diet include:

- No more than 15g of saturated (animal) fat per day.
- 40-50g of polyunsaturated oils per day (Eg. flax, hemp, olive) – excluding margarine, shortening and hydrogenated fats.
- Avoid processed and packaged foods.
- Drink lots of water (insufficient water can add to fatigue)
- Eliminate toxic and pro-inflammatory beverages like coffee and pop.
- Avoid gluten and dairy, as these will aggravate the condition over the long-term.
- Eat lots of whole, fresh, colourful foods that will deliver the nutrients you need to remain strong (no, there is no food value in a bagel).

- Avoid excitotoxins like MSG and Aspartame, which have a direct, negative impact on the brain.

2) There are many, many supplements that are said to benefit people with MS, and since there are many deficiencies in MS the two fit well. You can optimize your use of supplements during your work with your ND. The essentials of supplementation include:

- Fish oil – for its anti-inflammatory, brain restorative and autoimmune suppressive activities.
- Vitamin D – which has potent immune regulating activity.
- Antioxidants – to help manage the oxidative damage going on in the brain. (there are many antioxidants, your ND will direct you to the most appropriate ones)
- A therapeutic B-complex with minerals.

3) Live life to its fullest. This has tremendous impact on long-term outcomes for people with MS (and any other disease for that matter). If you have not already done so, read *When the Body Says No* by Gabor Mate MD. Include lots of activity. Laugh a lot.

4) Find ways to calm the central nervous system. Yoga, Qi-gong, Tai-Chi, creative visualization, meditation, castor oil packs...choose the right one(s) for you.

5) Find a good naturopathic doctor, who understands chronic disease, to add to your health care team.

By putting yourself in the driver's seat, you'll gain an understanding of what's going on with MS in the body, and the measures you can take to correct them.

Teri Jaklin ND practices at the Waterdown Clinic of Naturopathic Medicine in Waterdown, Ontario and can be reached at 905-690-9151.

Friends of Naturopathic Medicine



Member Benefits Include:

- 1) A subscription to the quarterly OAND newsletter, *Naturopathic Medicine Today*
- 2) Discounts at association endorsed or sponsored events;
- 3) A Nutritional and Wellness Guide (retail value \$6.99)
- 4) Discounts at participating Ontario health food and supplement stores.
- 5) 'THE HEALTHY SHOPPER' coupon book.

Be Connected to the Latest in Naturopathic Medicine

Call 416-233-2001 or email info@oand.org and Join Today

Friends of Naturopathic Medicine is a public education group created to provide credible information on a wide range of illnesses, treatments and issues from a naturopathic perspective. Friends is for people who are interested in how they can maintain and enhance their health and reduce the risk of disease.

As a friend you will be a non-voting, public member of the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors.