

YOUR FIRST

(of 7)

**STEPS TO
OVERCOMING MS**



**OVERCOMING
MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS**



Overcoming MS (OMS) is a nonprofit organization with the mission to educate, support and empower the global MS community in evidence-based lifestyle and medication choices that improve health outcomes.

What is **MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS?**

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a disease that affects the body's Central Nervous System (CNS).

In MS, the body's immune system attacks myelin, a coating that insulates nerve fibers. When myelin is damaged or destroyed, nerve impulses traveling to and from the brain and spinal cord are affected. This can cause life-changing symptoms, like extreme fatigue, numbness, tingling, tremors, slurred speech

and loss of balance and muscle coordination, loss of vision and, in the worst case, paralysis. Some of these symptoms can last a day, week, month, a year or forever. The intervals between relapses and remissions generally gets shorter as time goes on and the disease progresses.

To treat MS, it's vital to be diagnosed early, so consult your doctor at the first onset of possible symptoms.

How MS works

Healthy State

Nerve impulses travel through nerve cells sheathed in supple, intact myelin.

1. Attack/Inflammation

White cells penetrate the blood-brain barrier and enter the central nervous system.

2. Demyelination

White cells damage the myelin sheath that protects nerve fibers. Lesions form.

3. Damage

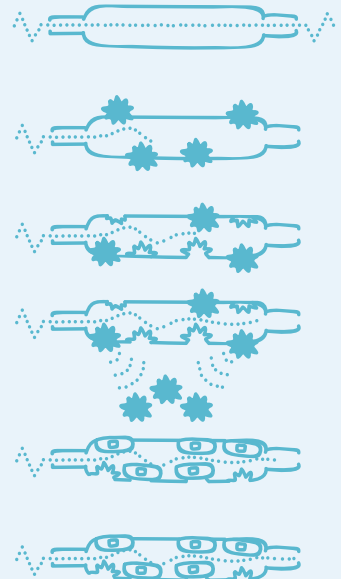
More white cells arrive, drawn by chemical messages from the first white cells.

4. Remission

Repair and scarring follow inflammation, but some myelin remains damaged.

5. Result

Impulses travel along the damaged nerves poorly. In severe cases, they don't travel at all.





Multiple Sclerosis FACTS

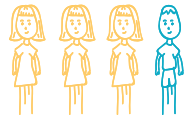
While there is no cure, there is hope for a brighter, healthier future.

- Professor
George Jelinek



OVER
2.5 MILLION
people worldwide
have MS

MS affects
3 TIMES
AS MANY WOMEN AS MEN
ALTHOUGH WE DON'T KNOW WHY



MS is typically diagnosed
between the ages of

20 AND **40**



MS, like heart disease and diabetes, is now considered a chronic Western disease, with progression influenced by lifestyle factors.

Factors affecting MS



GENETICS

Comprises 25% of the risk of getting MS



SATURATED FAT

Diets high in saturated fat including meat and dairy



VITAMIN D

Low levels of vitamin D and sun exposure. Incidence of MS increase the further you get from the equator.



STRESS



SMOKING

THE SILVER LINING

Like other chronic lifestyle illnesses, the latest research has shown MS is particularly well-suited to prevention. That's where the 7-Step Overcoming MS (OMS) Recovery Program fits in.

Read on to learn more.



Is recovery **POSSIBLE?**



Is there currently a cure for MS?

No.



Can you live a healthy, high quality of life with MS?

ABSOLUTELY!



MS research has been conducted for decades, and over 70,000 papers have been published. OMS taps into this existing body of research and conducts its own.



More than two decades of advanced drug development to alleviate symptoms of MS.



Extensive scientific research, including studies conducted by Nobel Prize winners, show preventive approaches work for MS.



The 7-Step OMS Recovery Program: an evidence-based proactive lifestyle approach, shown to achieve better health outcomes in people with MS.



OMS SCIENCE TIDBIT

Prevention works on a genetic level!



Dr. Dean Ornish, working with Nobel Prize winner Prof. Elizabeth Blackburn, showed making positive lifestyle modifications can change your DNA. So preventive medicine can really be DIY genetic engineering!



It will give you hope and transform your life

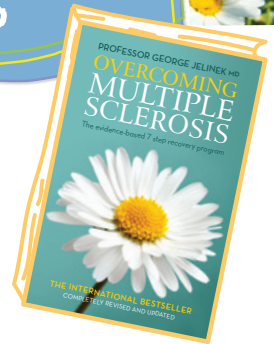
- Mark





ABOUT PROFESSOR GEORGE JELINEK and OMS

Professor George Jelinek
MBBS MD DipDHM FACEM



Diagnosed with MS in 1999, Prof. Jelinek has led the research into preventive and lifestyle-based approaches at the core of the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program, which he follows rigorously, remaining symptom-free since his original diagnosis.

- Australia's first Professor of Emergency Medicine.
- Past President of the Australasian Society for Emergency Medicine (ASEM) and past Vice President of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM).
- Founding Editor of the journal Emergency Medicine Australasia, a MEDLINE-indexed journal that he has edited continuously for over 25 years. Chief Editor in Neuroepidemiology at leading MEDLINE-indexed neurology journal, Frontiers in Neurology.
- Recipient of the 2003 ACEM Medal, the highest individual honor in the specialty of Emergency Medicine in Australia and New Zealand.
- Winner of the 2006 John Gilroy Potts Award and the 2012 and 2014 Edward Brentnall Awards for the best publications in Emergency Medicine and Public Health, respectively.
- Western Australia Finalist for 2008 Australian of the Year, and Victoria Finalist for the 2016 Australian of the Year.
- Current Head of the Neuroepidemiology Unit (NEU) within the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health at The University of Melbourne.

What is OMS?



OVERCOMING
MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS

Empowering people with MS


Overcoming MS (OMS) is a global nonprofit organization with the mission of educating, supporting and empowering people with MS and the broader MS community, including healthcare practitioners, about the evidence-based research which prescribes a proactive lifestyle approach to foster better health outcomes in MS.

7-Step Recovery Program

OMS promotes the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program, the evidence-based and rigorously-researched diet-and-lifestyle-modification approach developed by Prof. Jelinek.

Independent and unbiased

To remain independent and unbiased, OMS does not accept any financial or “in kind” support from pharmaceutical or other “third-party” companies where there may be a conflict of interest.



OMS is a registered nonprofit in the USA, UK, and Australia.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OMS AND
ITS LEADERSHIP TEAM,
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

www.overcomingms.org



OVERCOMING
MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS

1,000
Pieces of
research



5,000
Medical
journals

THE EVIDENCE

The 7-Step OMS Recovery Program is based on rigorous scientific research and mounting evidence that preventive approaches like OMS can make a positive impact on chronic lifestyle diseases like MS.



The tenets of the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program are based on over 1,000 pieces of research drawn from the top 5,000 medical journals.

In addition, the 7-Step Recovery Program is validated by ongoing research studies such as HOLISM and STOP MS, run by the research team at the University of Melbourne in Australia.

HOLISM

- HOLISM surveyed over **2,500 people** from **57 countries**, comprising a mix of people with MS living healthy lifestyles, and a large proportion who were not.
- HOLISM showed people following the recommendations of the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program had better health outcomes, including less disability, fewer relapses, better quality of life, and less incidence of depression and fatigue.
- HOLISM has generated over **15 research papers** published in top peer-reviewed medical journals, such as PLOS ONE, BMC Neurology, and BMC Psychiatry.

STOP MS

- STOP MS is a study of over 400 people who attended a 5-day OMS Recovery Program retreat and followed the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program.
- STOP MS will follow up with participants at the 1, 3, 5 and 10-year marks.
- 1 and 5-year follow-ups of STOP MS participants have shown **increases in physical and mental health quality of life of 15% to 20%**. Participants at the 1-year mark have also demonstrated marked decreases in relapses, as well as rates of depression and fatigue.

So now you've learned a little more about MS, gotten to know Professor Jelinek and OMS, and brushed up on the research that supports the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program. But what's it all about? Read on to learn more, and get even more info at www.overcomingms.org



Step 1: DIET

Simply put, the OMS Recovery Program diet is a plant-based wholefood diet, plus seafood, that minimizes intake of saturated fat. Also, omega-3s have neuroprotective properties, so supplementation is recommended.



OMS SCIENCE TIDBIT

OMS dietary guidelines are based in part on the pioneering work of Professor Roy Swank, who conducted a 34-year study that showed people with MS consuming a diet low in saturated fat had dramatically better health outcomes.

Even though **meat and dairy are a no-no**, there are plenty of foods you can enjoy (and some you should avoid!) And don't forget to consult our website for a range of delicious recipe ideas and videos!

Remember your omega-3s! Flaxseed oil is better than fish oil as a source of omega-3. 20+ mls daily is recommended.





COMMON QUESTIONS

Should I avoid frying?

Avoid frying in oil, but dry-frying on a non-stick pan, or stir-frying with water or steam are fine.



Can I drink alcohol?

Yes! Moderate alcohol consumption is associated with better quality of life in people with MS.

Should I take multivitamin supplements?

There is ample research that shows taking multivitamin supplements can cause real harm. If you do wish to take supplements, B group vitamins are recommended, but otherwise please consult your doctor.

Should I avoid gluten?

There is insufficient evidence to warrant excluding gluten from your diet, unless you have a separate condition that creates gluten sensitivity or intolerance.



IN A NUTSHELL



- Eat a healthy, plant-based wholefood diet plus seafood and cut down your saturated fat intake dramatically.
- The HOLISM study demonstrated that people with MS adhering to the OMS Recovery Program diet recommendations enjoyed dramatically better health across the board.



Step 2: SUN AND VITAMIN D

There is growing evidence to suggest that vitamin D is important in both preventing MS and improving your health outcomes if you have MS. Vitamin D can be absorbed naturally through healthy sun exposure, or by way of a vitamin D supplement.



The sun: a natural source of vitamin D

Get 15 minutes of sun 3-5 times per week (based on a UV index of 7), as close to full-body exposure as practical.

5,000 – Can't get enough sun? Take a vitamin D supplement
10,000


Take 5,000-10,000 IUs of vitamin D daily.



OMS SCIENCE TIDBIT

Vitamin D is made by the body when the skin is exposed to the sun's UVB rays. Exposing a smaller area of skin for more time doesn't work, because once a given patch of skin produces its daily dose of vitamin D, no more is made till the next day.

OMS SCIENCE TIDBIT



People with MS should aim for a blood level of vitamin D in the range of 150-225 nmol/L (or 60-90 ng/mL). Learn your vitamin D blood level by getting tested by your doctor, or using a home test kit.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Are vitamin D megadoses safe?

Yes! Research has shown that one-off megadoses of vitamin D are a perfectly safe way to raise blood levels of vitamin D quickly.

Are vitamin D supplements safe?

Yes, up to 10,000 IUs daily is perfectly safe according to all current research findings. For more information about vitamin D, consult your doctor or visit our website.

Is sun exposure safe?

Yes, in moderation. Research has proven that regular low-dose sun exposure is important for those at risk of developing MS.



There is a light at the end of this tunnel!

- Rosemary

OMS has given me the tools to get my life back. There aren't words to express my gratitude

- Sarah

IN A NUTSHELL



- There is substantial evidence that shows adequate sun exposure and vitamin D intake are crucial to preventing MS, especially for those at high risk.
- The HOLISM study showed better quality of life for people with MS who supplemented with the recommended daily doses of vitamin D.



Step 3: EXERCISE

OMS recommends 30 minutes of exercise 3-5 times per week, outdoors if possible, to maximize vitamin D production.

Regular vigorous exercise, even in small amounts, can prevent MS but also makes a big difference in health outcomes to those who already have it.



A must-do for all people with MS
- Amanda

How do you get started?



- Start slowly and build up to a level of regular exercise that's right for you.
- Consider working with a qualified personal trainer to build a customized exercise program.
- Balance lower-impact exercise, like yoga, walking and Pilates, with higher-impact exercise, like running, swimming or cycling.
- Exercise has other benefits too, like improved cognitive function and reduced inflammation.

Check out www.overcomingms.org for a range of exercise ideas and videos for all levels of ability.

IN A NUTSHELL



- All research points to regular exercise improving the health of people with MS (and everyone else!)
- Preliminary research has suggested that regular exercise slows the progression of MS.
- The HOLISM study found that people with MS who exercised more had a better quality of life, regardless of level of disability.
- Remember, any exercise is better than none!



Step 4: MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS

In today's fast-paced, high-pressure world, stress seems to be everywhere. Managing and reducing stress is vital to both mental and physical health, and can have a profound impact on the immune system. In MS, stress has been shown to trigger relapses, making stress management vital.

To reduce stress, OMS recommends meditating 30 minutes daily.

- There is an enormous amount of evidence suggesting meditation brings many positive benefits, so how do you get started?
- Just meditate. Start slowly, meditating for just 1-2 minutes per day, and build your practice from there.
- Try a few different techniques until you find one that suits you best.
- Use other techniques that reduce stress – such as keeping a journal, seeking counseling, or visualization – basically anything that will help reduce your stress levels.
- You can find several guided meditations on www.overcomingms.org, but there are also plenty of apps, classes and retreats that will get you on the path to daily meditation.

IN A NUTSHELL



- Research shows a link between stress and MS progression, so keeping stress under control is vital to your health when you have MS (and even if you don't).
- There has been a surge in recent scientific research over the last decade that has shown that meditation and mindfulness can help with depression, pain, compassion and happiness, and can "rewire" the brain.
- HOLISM study data show that people with MS who meditate have a better quality of life than those who don't.
- Any daily meditation is better than none, so what are you waiting for?

Step 5: MEDICATION



Some people with MS choose to take medication to get their symptoms under control. This decision is not in conflict with the principles of the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program. We advocate doing whatever it takes to live a better, healthier life with MS.

There are many things to consider when choosing a medication:



Should I be taking medication at all?

If so, which one is right for me?

What are the side effects?

Shall I take a pill or an injectable?



These are all important questions and they should be addressed in close consultation with your doctor. For more information on a range of disease-modifying drugs currently available to treat MS, please visit our website.

One further thought: OMS thinks that medication has its place in your treatment plan to control symptoms, but since many disease-modifying drugs have very potent side effects, weigh your choices carefully, and weigh the risks versus the benefits of any medication you consider. **Any of these decisions should be made in consultation with your doctor.**

IN A NUTSHELL



- Currently approved disease-modifying drugs have been shown to lower relapse rates and reduce the progression of MS.
- The side effects of certain medications can be quite severe, so the choice of disease-modifying drug, or whether to take one at all, should be weighed carefully and in close consultation with your doctor.
- Overall, comprehensive lifestyle changes such as the evidence-based 7-Step OMS Recovery Program are an essential part of managing MS and living a healthy life. Medication should be considered when and if needed, and under the supervision of your doctor.




Step 6: PREVENT FAMILY MEMBERS FROM GETTING MS

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and that's certainly true with MS. Since genetics makes up 25% of the risk of getting MS, if you have MS there are steps you can take to significantly decrease the chances that your family members will get it.



IN A NUTSHELL



- Smoking precipitates and worsens MS, in addition to increasing your risk of developing other diseases, like cancer, so quitting smoking, or not starting, is a must.
- Get adequate sun exposure and supplement with vitamin D to reduce the risk of developing MS.
- Eat a healthy diet that's low in saturated fat, and supplement with flaxseed oil. The OMS diet is not just good for people with MS, it's good for everyone!
- Keep your stress levels down and exercise regularly.



Step 7: **CHANGE YOUR LIFE, FOR LIFE**



You are the captain of your own health ship, and making a choice to follow the lifestyle principles recommended by the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program means you're setting a course for a better and healthier life.

Recovering from MS is definitely possible, and the majority of the people following the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program live better and healthier lives. Here's a recap of what you need to do to get started, and remember, you can consult www.overcomingms.org or Professor George Jelinek's book for more information:

- Eat a plant-based wholefood diet, plus seafood, and avoid meat and dairy.
- Supplement with omega-3s, preferably flaxseed oil.
- Get enough vitamin D, either from sun exposure or by taking 5,000-10,000 IUs daily, or a mixture of both.
- Exercise 30 minutes daily, 3-5 times per week.
- Meditate daily to reduce stress.
- Consult your doctor and take medication if needed.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS:

- Changing old habits is hard, but keep your eyes on the prize of a healthier life. You may not see results immediately, but the evidence has shown that if you stick to the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program, you will feel better in time.
- Find the support you need to make these life changes from friends, family, and other members of the OMS community. Read on to learn more about OMS community support.
- And lastly, it's never too late to start taking control of the diet and lifestyle choices that can help you lead a better, healthier life. So what are you waiting for?

Join the OMS COMMUNITY



OVERCOMING
MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS

Overcoming MS is dedicated to supporting people with MS around the world who are ready to make proactive choices to improve their health and their lives by following the evidence-based, scientifically-researched, and mainstream principles of the 7-Step OMS Recovery Program.

The OMS program is extremely empowering due to its evidence-based nature
- Stephen

The best thing in my life I could do for me and my future
- Monika

You can find additional information and support in a variety of ways:

- Check out our website for a host of information and resources, and connect with OMSers on our Forum.
- Connect with the OMS community and get our latest updates on our social media channels.
- Read Professor George Jelinek's book.
- Get support in your area, and connect with other local OMSers, through the OMS Global Ambassador Program. Learn more on our website.

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 www.overcomingms.org

Welcome to the OMS community,
and congratulations on taking your first
step to a better and healthier life!

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Registered as a Company limited by guarantee in England and Wales No. 9044459.

Australia

Registered with the ACNC.
ABN 50 603 488 508.