



WEBINAR   
WEDNESDAYS

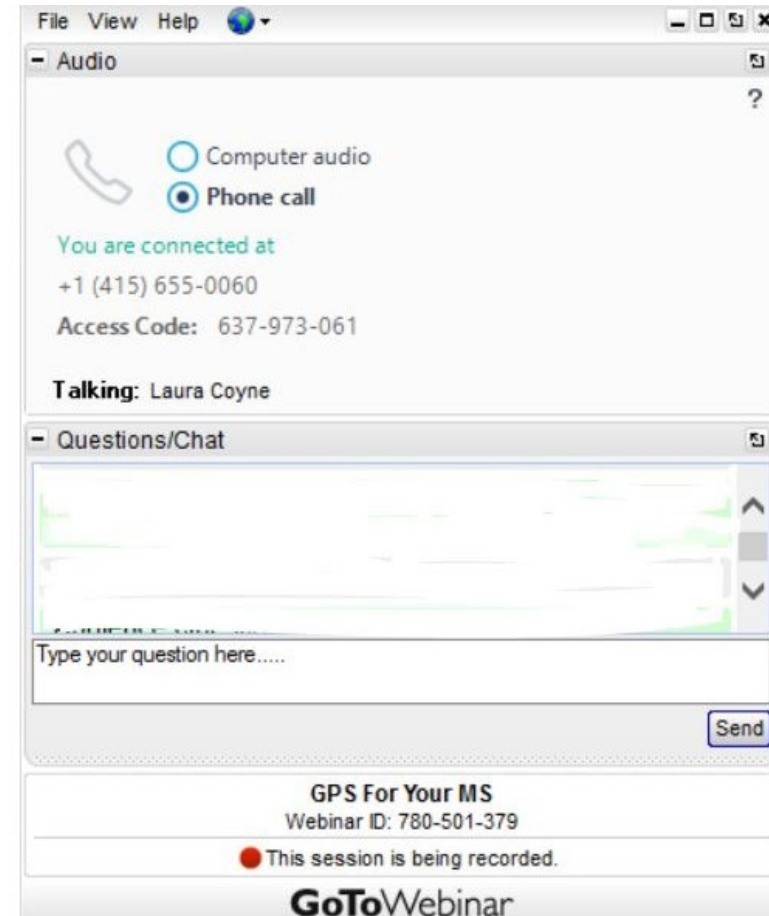
# Fatigue: How To Get More Energy and Keep It Up!

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# How to Ask Questions During the Webinar

Type in your questions using the  
**Questions/Chat** box



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# Learning Objectives

1

Identify all the factors that contribute to fatigue in people with MS.

2

Recognize signs of fatigue in the moment.

3

Learn energy management techniques and strategies to make the most of each moment.

# Fatigue: The Invisible Symptom



“Overwhelmed”

“My hands won’t work”

“I’m trudging through snow”

“Hit the wall”

“Unplugged”

“Wet noodle”

“I can’t think”

**Fatigue is  
different for  
everyone**



# Fatigue and MS

- 75-95% of people with MS are affected by fatigue
- 50-60% state that fatigue is their worst symptom
- One of two major reasons for leaving the workforce
- Listed as a disability by the Social Security Administration



**Primary  
Fatigue**

**vs.**

**Secondary  
Fatigue**

You don't know what fatigue is until  
you've had to rest after taking a shower



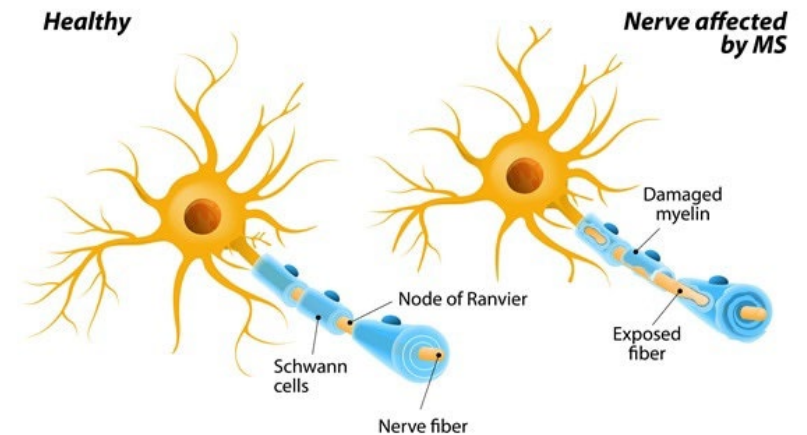
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# Primary MS Fatigue Lassitude

- An over-response of the immune system producing flu-like symptoms & fatigue.
- Demyelination makes the body work harder through the nervous system, thus producing fatigue.
- Lassitude is often experienced daily and is out of proportion to the person's level of activity or sleep.
- This fatigue is specific to MS and those without MS won't experience this type of fatigue.

## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS



# Secondary Fatigue Contributing Factors

- Poor temperature regulation
- Mental/Cognitive exertion
- Sleep disruption
- Poor sleep hygiene
- Medications
- Mood/Emotions
- Physical over-exertion
- Physical deconditioning
- Comorbidities
- Stress
- Illness
- Diet

# Early Warnings of Fatigue

- Weakness
  - e.g. Foot drop
- Slowed movements
- Decreased coordination
- Balance changes
- Vision changes
- Pain
- Muscle tightness/ spasticity
- Difficulty speaking
- Increased task errors
- Cognitive changes
- Emotional changes
- General tiredness



# Learn To Recognize Your Warning Signs

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- Keep a journal
- Set reminders to do self check-ins
- Create lists of your warning signs
- Ask friends and family to point out changes
- LISTEN TO YOUR BODY!
  - It's communicating more than you may realize

# How Support Partners Can Help!

- Look for warning signs
- Communicate in a caring way
- Ask the person with MS how they are feeling
- Offer support
- Be creative with solutions
- Avoid judgment
  - This can lead to someone trying to push through the symptoms resulting in more damage



# Fatigue

**Now that we know what it is,  
what it looks and feels like...**

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**What do we do about it?**



# Banking & Budgeting

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Learn how to  
**SAVE** and **SPEND**  
your energy wisely



# If MS gave you \$1 a day...

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Imagine that dollar represented the energy you have each day...

- Where do you spend your pennies?
- Where are you overspending?
- How could you save some pennies?
- What special things do you want to save up for?
- Where can you find the DISCOUNTS!?



# Budgeting

Planning and  
choosing how to  
spend your energy

Are your “bad MS  
days” just poorly  
managed?

Me: I'm so happy I'm saving money

Me to me: Now spend all of it



# Budgeting Strategies

- Be flexible
  - Things won't always go as planned
- It's OK to say No!
  - Set boundaries for yourself and others
- Evaluate your standards
  - Type A personality?
- Evaluate your priorities
  - Family, Health, Exercise, Spirituality, Work, Leisure, etc.





# Banking

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**Every time you use a technique, tool, or device to save energy you are “banking” those pennies!**



# Energy Management and Strategies

- Healthy nutrition
- Medication management
- Energy conservation techniques
- Adaptive equipment
- Stress management
- Effective communication
  - (family, friends, healthcare team)
- Temperature regulation
- Exercise
- Cognition
- Sleep





# Healthy Nutrition

- Did you put enough gas in your tank?
- Do you eat a good balance of short and long-acting energy?



## Medication Management

- Would you benefit from medication to improve your alertness?
- Review your complete medication list with your doctor to see how it's affecting your fatigue.

# Energy Conservation Techniques

- Proper posture and body mechanics
- Sit when possible
- Use orthotics, mobility devices, and other adaptive equipment
- Organize your home
  - Avoid unnecessary walking, reaching, bending, carrying
- You don't always know what fatigues you until you stop doing it

# Adaptive Equipment

- Search “Adaptive equipment for \_\_\_\_\_” or “Adapted \_\_\_\_\_”
- **Adapted clothing:** Zip shoes, magnetic buttons, foot funnel, elastic waist pants
- **Bathroom:** Tub transfer bench, grab bars, toilet rails, bidets,
- **Kitchen tools:** Rocker knife, mesh gloves, Swedish cutting board
- **Chores:** Rolling laundry baskets, long handle broom/dustpan, long handle scrubbers for tubs, light weight vacuums
- **In the yard:** Self propelled mowers, benches for sitting while gardening, umbrellas and cooling vests for cooling
- **Miscellaneous:** Reachers, dycem for gripping, stools, rolling carts
  - Alexa, Echo and Siri are also great adaptive tools!

# Stress Management

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- It is ok to say no
- Set boundaries
- Plan leisure activities too
- Communicate
- Spread out your To Do List
- Avoid being a perfectionist. Cut corners when possible.





# Effective Communication

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- Be honest with yourself and others
- Negotiate
- Don't wait for a crisis
- Discuss situations in advance whenever possible







# Heat Management: Keep Your Cool!

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- Do outdoor activities when temps are low
- Cooling Equipment
- Wicking clothing
- Hydration
- Cold snacks or meals
- Personal fans and misters
- Dress in layers
- Stay in the shade
- Cool your car

# Exercise for Energy

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## Exercise can

- Reverse some strength loss
- Increase endurance
- Improve quality of sleep
- Decrease spasticity
- Decrease depression, anxiety, stress
- Improve balance and general mobility
- Help manage pain



# Cognition

- Make lists (electronic ones are reusable!)
- Use calendar, reminders on your phone, apps
- Write it down, take screen shots, take photos
- Pace yourself when performing cognitive tasks
  - Complex tasks earlier in the day



## Sleep

- Provides the body (including the nervous system) time to rest, recover and repair.
- Sleep problems have been reported to be 4X higher in people with MS
  - Sleep apnea
  - Insomnia
  - Restless leg syndrome
  - Nocturia (nighttime urination)
  - Spasms
  - Pain

# 4 P's

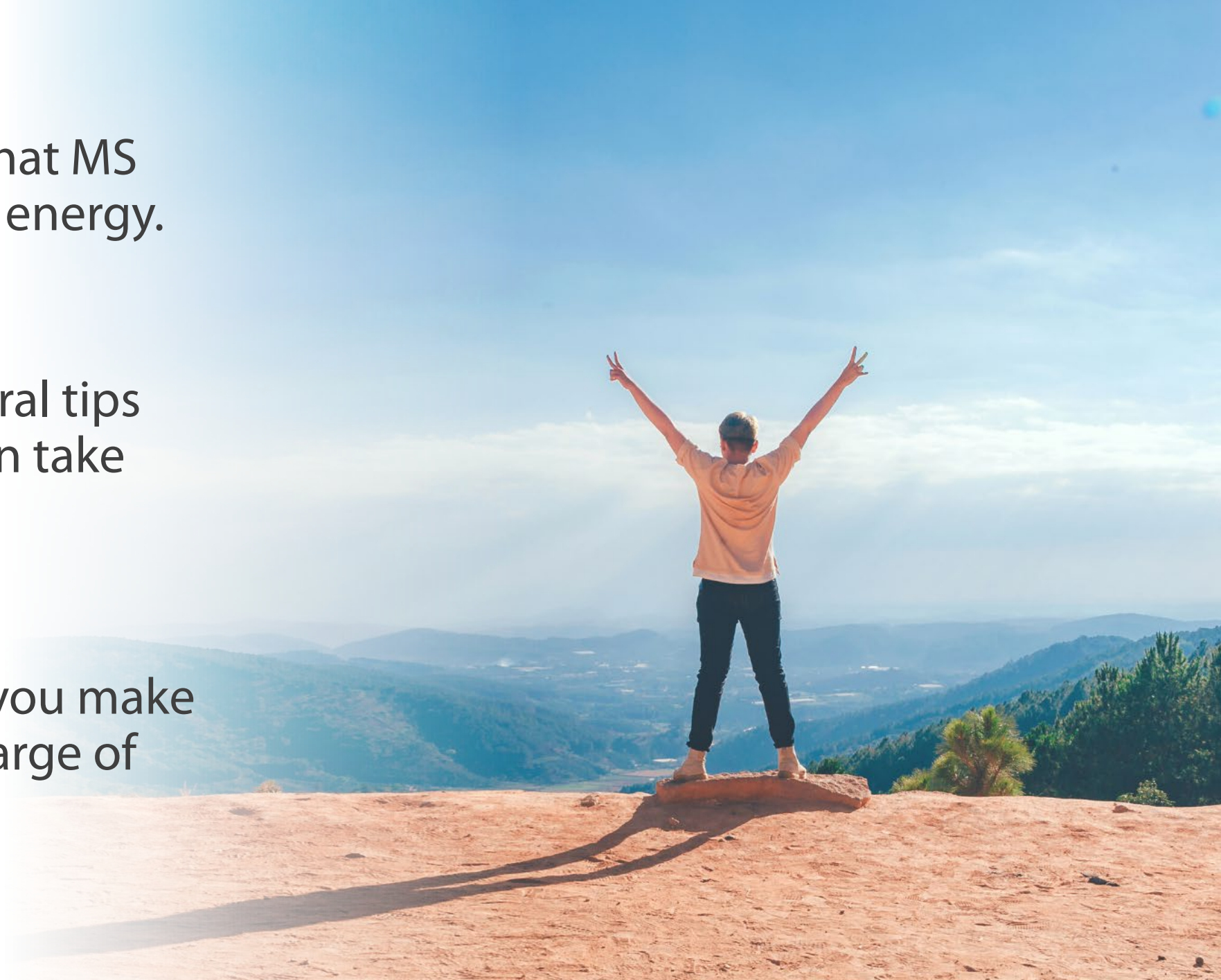
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- **Prioritizing:** Determine what you need and want to do during the hour, day or week. What can wait till another day or for another person?
- **Pacing:** Measure each activity to determine how much energy it will consume. Try to alternate the difficult and easy tasks to avoid burnout early on.
- **Planning:** Schedule everything possible! Write it down and look at your day. Are you going to overdo it? Can you move things around so you can squeeze some breaks in there?
- **Positioning:** Sit or lay when possible. Use gadgets, tools or mobility devices to help you save energy for other tasks.

Often people fear that MS  
will take away their energy.

Now you have several tips  
and tools so you can take  
that power back!

What changes will you make  
so that you're in charge of  
your energy?





Q & A





## Connect With Us



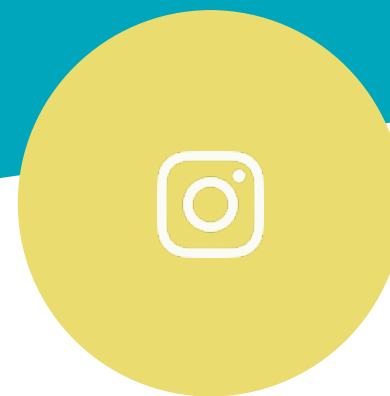
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# MARCH PROGRAMS

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JUMPSTART – March 10  
*Fatigue: Get Started With  
Everyday Energy Tips*

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED – March 15  
*Fatigue and Energy*



WEBINAR   
WEDNESDAYS

# Cognition: How To Improve Your Thinking, Attention, and Memory

Wednesday, April 6 at 8pm ET

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