

## **What is Multiple Sclerosis?**

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a condition that affects the central nervous system, which includes the brain and spinal cord. In MS, the protective covering around the nerves, called myelin, becomes damaged. This damage disrupts the messages that the brain sends to the body, leading to symptoms like numbness, tingling, weakness, vision problems, and difficulty with balance and coordination.

### **Things to Avoid with MS:**

1. **Overheating:** Heat can make MS symptoms worse, so it's important to avoid hot baths, saunas, and exercising in hot weather.
2. **Smoking:** Cigarette smoking can speed up the progression of MS and make symptoms worse.
3. **Stress:** Stress can trigger MS flare-ups, so it's important to find ways to manage stress.
4. **Unhealthy diet:** A diet high in processed foods and low in nutrients can worsen MS symptoms.

### **Things That Can Help with MS:**

1. **Stay cool:** Use fans, air conditioning, or cooling vests to help regulate body temperature.
2. **Exercise regularly:** Gentle exercises like yoga, swimming, or tai chi can help improve strength, flexibility, and balance.
3. **Eat a healthy diet:** Focus on eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins to support overall health.
4. **Manage stress:** Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing, meditation, or spending time on hobbies you enjoy.

5. Work with a healthcare team: A neurologist, physical therapist, and occupational therapist can help you manage MS symptoms and maintain independence.

While there is currently no cure for MS, there are treatments available to help manage symptoms and slow the progression of the disease. If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with MS, it's important to work closely with a healthcare team to develop a treatment plan that works best for you.