MS and Mobility

by AMY MANLEY

Retaining Your Mobility with MS

For people living with multiple sclerosis (MS), mobility is often a big concern, especially if the diagnosis comes later on in life. Losing your independence can be a scary process, and the idea of having to rely on others is difficult for most people. The good news is that it is possible for MS and mobility to go together, and for you to stay largely independent.

According to specialists, there are techniques you can use to improve your mobility and accessibility. By using the techniques outlined below, you won't be limited by your condition.

Prevent Reduced Mobility

If you're able to get around on your own, it's important that you keep up a steady activity level. While some patients find their mobility is greatly reduced right away, if you're able to move around and complete different daily activities, doing so each day will help slow the production of reduced mobility be stretching the limbs and keeping the muscles strong.

Pace Yourself

One of the most important things to do is pace yourself and understand your limits. Do not try and push yourself past those limits, because that will limit your mobility and independence more than MS ever could. Understand your body and which activities tire you more than others, or at what time of the day you have the most energy. Use these times to be productive and get around, and save the times that you feel tired for relaxing.

Don't be afraid to stop and rest during normal everyday activates. There is nothing wrong with needing a few minutes to relax. This can, in turn, help to keep you going for a little bit longer than you normally would. Breaks should be considered for every type of activity in order to increase your ability to stay independent and mobile. If your hand hurts while brushing your teeth, don't be afraid to put the toothbrush down and relax. Another tip is to not strain yourself. Rather, sit down during many of your daily activities like cooking or cleaning.

Comfortable Shoes

Another tip for remaining mobile and independent is to buy comfortable shoes. If you are still walking a great deal during the day, a good pair of comfortable shoes can be a life saver. Don't substitute comfort for fashion, because when you have MS, mobility depends on good shoes.

Consider Mobility Aids

There are various aids, called mobility aids, which can be used by patients with MS who have decreased mobility.

While some patients can remain mobile by keeping a consistent daily activity level, those who cannot don't have to reduce their quality of life. The mobility aids can help in various areas of life, from home activities to driving a car.

Wheelchair Advice

Also, if you are in a wheelchair, making that wheelchair personalized is a great tip as well. Make sure there is room for you to put things you commonly use or could use throughout the house on the chair. A long point, stick, or cane that can help in reaching high objects or opening doors, newspapers, reading materials, and other items can be kept in side pockets on the wheelchair.

Lighting and Home Accessibility

One last tip on remaining mobile and independent is to outfit your house so it can accommodate you. Try installing an automated lighting system in your house, so that you do not need to reach to turn lights off or on in each room. Another idea is to make sure that your house is accessible for you. If you are in a wheelchair, ensure that your house can accommodate this, so that you are able to get through doorways and throughout your house safely and efficiently.

Keeping items within reach is one effective tool towards increasing your accessibility. There are specialized tools available on the market that help improve your accessibility by ensuring everything's within reach. These tools extend to items that are placed in far or high locations, and some even have claws on them to make grabbing the item easy.

Asking for Help

While many people love their independence more than anything, living with MS can change circumstances. It is important for you to understand when it may be time to ask for help. Asking for help in getting around and doing everyday things can be difficult, but MS is tough disease that requires a strong will and many people to support you.

If you are finding that living with MS and trying to remain independent is becoming increasingly difficult, it may be time to speak to your loved ones or health care professional on how best to deal with this situation. Asking for help does not mean you are giving up your independence, it simply means that you are strong enough to realize when you need help.

You may want to consider hiring an aid to help you through different daily routines. A home health-aid offers services based upon what you need. They can help you with light house work, or even help you get ready each day. You want to determine how much help you'll need with mobility and accessibility before hiring an air.

Final Thoughts

You don't have to go without things you enjoy because of the side-effects of MS. Always look for a loophole and find your way through the difficult times. It can take some getting used to your new way of life, but by using the tools outlined below, you'll find your quality of life doesn't have to be scarified from Multiple Sclerosis.