# 4 Things That Could Be Making Your MS Symptoms Worse

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## MS Flare Triggers

A key characteristic of multiple sclerosis is the worsening of symptoms at various times. This is called an exacerbation.

When an exacerbation occurs, doctors won't be able to determine what the initial trigger was. You may have to uncover it for yourself. Think about your habits; are they acting as MS triggers? There may be certain habits you have that aggravate your MS.

Some of these habits include:

**1. Sitting in the Sun**

While a little sun can be beneficial, spending an extended period of time in the sun can cause exacerbations in MS patients, who are often sensitive to heat. Always wear sunscreen and don't stay in direct sunlight for too long.

**2. Skipping Physical Therapy**

Because MS can affect the muscles and make them progressively weaker, you can't afford to miss any physical therapy sessions. You need the stimulation of physical therapy to keep the muscle tone you have. If you have to miss one, reschedule it within a few days.

**3. Low Levels of Vitamin D**

Studies have confirmed that multiple sclerosis patients often have a vitamin D deficiency. Vitamin D is more than a vitamin; it's a hormone that affects the immune system and nervous system, and it's critical that you have annual vitamin D blood test to determine your vitamin D levels. Levels between 30 and 100 are considered normal, but a level thirty means that you are on the verge of a vitamin D deficiency. Some experts, like Dr. Joseph Mercola, an osteopathic physician who is well known in the field of natural healing, strive for levels between 50 and 70  for their patients with chronic disease. Vitamin D can also help to alleviate depression. Keep your levels of vitamin D within the normal range.

**4. Lack of Movement**

Exercise is important for managing your symptoms, as well as keeping in good overall health. Numerous studies have shown that exercise is beneficial for MS patients, with positive results including decreased fatigue and depression, more strength and fewer cognitive problems.

If you are in a wheelchair or are bedridden, it's still important to move regularly to avoid bed or pressure

sores. Frequent movement will relieve the pressure and allow the blood to flow better.