



STOP M-S IN ITS TRACKS

THE NATIONAL M-S SOCIETY FUNDS PROMISING RESEARCH THAT WILL STOP M-S IN ITS TRACKS, RESTORE LOST FUNCTION AND END M-S FOREVER. WE ENGAGED THE WORLD'S THOUGHT LEADERS AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH M-S TO DEVELOP THE SOCIETY'S RESEARCH STRATEGY, TO PRIORITIZE RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT WILL LEAD TO BREAKTHROUGHS IN RESEARCH AND BREAKTHROUGHS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH M-S. SO I THINK IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT FOR US TO UNDERSTAND WHY SOME PEOPLE GET M-S AND OTHERS DON'T. NO ONE ELSE IN MY FAMILY DOES HAVE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, BUT I HAVE THREE CHILDREN, SO IT WEIGHS ON MY MIND HEAVILY. WE KNOW THAT M-S IS, IN PART, GENETICALLY INHERITED. WE KNOW THAT THE DISEASE IS MORE FREQUENT, IT'S MORE PREVALENT, IN CERTAIN POPULATIONS THAN OTHERS. WE'RE STILL UNSURE WHAT ARE THE BIOLOGICAL MECHANISMS THAT LEAD TO DISEASE ONSET AND STUDYING THE RISK FACTORS PROBABLY WILL TEACH US WHAT ARE THESE BIOLOGICAL PROCESSES THAT ARE TAKING PLACE, SO WE CAN EITHER DESIGN STRATEGIES TO PREVENT THE DISEASE OR MAYBE TREAT THE DISEASE BETTER AND TRY TO REMOVE INDIVIDUALS FROM SPECIFIC EXPOSURES, IF IT'S FEASIBLE. WHAT INTERESTS ME THE MOST, MOST RECENTLY, ARE THINGS LIKE THE FINDINGS ABOUT PROBIOTICS AND THAT YOUR GUT BACTERIA DETERMINE A LOT OF THE STUFF THAT YOU GET. THE GUT MICROBIOME MAY BE DIFFERENT IN PEOPLE LIVING WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS. AND IT'S A COMBINATION OF AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE GENETICS THAT DRIVE DISEASE AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRIGGERS THAT DRIVE M-S WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD US TO A POINT WHERE WE ARE ABLE TO PREVENT M-S FROM OCCURRING IN THE FIRST PLACE. ANOTHER FOCUS OF OUR RESEARCH IS UNDERSTANDING ALL OF THE PATHWAYS THAT LEAD TO DISABILITY PROGRESSION. FOR SOME PEOPLE, M-S IS JUST A NUISANCE. FOR OTHERS IT PRODUCES BENIGN SYMPTOMS AND FOR OTHERS IT STILL IS A DEVASTATING AND RAPIDLY LIFE-ALTERING CONDITION. WELL, I THINK BECAUSE THERE IS NO CURE WE DO THE BEST WE CAN DO TO SLOW DOWN WHAT'S HAPPENING. THE APPROVAL OF OCREVUS IS INCREDIBLY REWARDING TO ME PERSONALLY BUT THE MOST EXCITING THING IS THAT BECAUSE OF THE RESEARCH THAT WAS DONE BY MANY PEOPLE, A TREATMENT IS NOW AVAILABLE THAT REPRESENTS A SEA CHANGE FOR PEOPLE WITH M-S. THE TREATMENT ALSO SENDS US BACK TO THE LABORATORY ARMED WITH NEW IDEAS ABOUT THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE OF M-S AND THE DRIVERS OF PROGRESSIVE M-S. THIS WORK COULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT THE SUPPORT FROM DAY ONE OF THE NATIONAL M-S SOCIETY. THE NERVOUS SYSTEM HAS A TREMENDOUS ABILITY TO REPAIR ITSELF. MY HOPE IS MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE THAT CAN HELP ME TO REGAIN SOME OF THE SOME OF THE FUNCTIONS SOME OF THE THINGS THAT I'VE LOST AND CONTINUE MY IMPROVING MY QUALITY OF LIFE. IN MY LAB, WE'RE VERY INTERESTED IN UNDERSTANDING HOW MYELIN IS FORMED BECAUSE WE THINK THAT IF WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM THAT DRIVES MYELINATION, WE CAN HARNESS THAT PROGRAM. I THINK IT'S POSSIBLE THAT WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, WE WILL HAVE NEW DRUGS TO PROMOTE MYELIN REPAIR. I WOULD LOVE TO GET MY NERVES FIXED. SO AM I AFRAID OF MY DAUGHTER'S, THAT THEY HAVE M-S? WHAT I AM DETERMINED TO DO IS, I'M DETERMINED TO WALK AND DANCE AT THEIR WEDDING AND THAT MEANS THAT I GOT TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF. PEOPLE WITH M-S WANT TO KNOW HOW TO LIVE WELL. HOW GOOD IS MY BALANCE? HOW HEALTHY IS MY DIET? SOMETIMES, IT'S LIKE HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH WATER TODAY? ARE YOU SLEEPING ENOUGH? HAVE YOU HAD GREENS AND FRUITS AND VEGETABLES? A LOT OF PEOPLE WITH M-S ASKED ME WHAT DIET THEY SHOULD BE DOING FOR M-S. AS FAR AS NUTRITION, DIET AND EXERCISE, I'VE FOUND A REALLY STRONG CORRELATION. I'VE BEEN DOING PILATES, I THINK FOR ABOUT FIVE OR SIX YEARS. I'VE LOST TRACK. IT HELPS ME CLIMB THE STAIRS THAT I HAVE TO CLIMB TO MY FRONT DOOR, TWENTY-FOUR STEPS. IT HELPS ME CARRY MY GROCERIES UP THE STAIRS. THERE IS GROWING EVIDENCE THAT LIFESTYLE FACTORS AND WELLNESS ACTIVITIES CAN INCREASE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH M-S. WE ALSO RECOMMEND A HEALTHY DIET AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BECAUSE COGNITIVE RESILIENCE IS BUILT OVER TIME. THE M-S SOCIETY SUPPORTS SCIENCE AND STICKS WITH THE SCIENTISTS AND HELPS ALSO BRING TOGETHER GROUPS OF PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES. ALL OF THESE ARE NECESSARY IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE MEANINGFUL SUCCESS AGAINST THIS COMPLICATED PROBLEM. SOMETIMES THERE'S MORE IDEAS THAN FUNDING AVAILABLE, SO THE M-S SOCIETY REALLY FEELS IS THIS NICHE TO FUND GREAT IDEAS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE BEEN NEVER REALIZED. PEOPLE WITH M-S UNDERSTAND THAT WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER. THIS IS A PARTNERSHIP AND WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT OUR WORK WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE. IT'S THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY THAT ENABLES THE PROGRESS THAT HAS HAPPENED OVER THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS. THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF THE SOCIETY'S RESEARCH EFFORTS IS TO STOP M-S IN ITS TRACKS, RESTORE LOST FUNCTION AND END M-S FOREVER.