

“Can You Believe It’s Already May?” Newsletter

Multiple Sclerosis Support Group

—◆— Next meeting: Thursday, May 12, from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at the NAH Training Center, located at the west end of the Fort Valley Shopping Center, 1000 N. Humphreys, Suite 241-242. The topic will be “Build Your Best Beach Body,” with Lynn Medhoff, PT, and Leslie Hutchinson leading us in some weight, cardio and balance work. The program will be presented as an interactive opportunity, not in a lecture format, so we will have lunch after the program. Please wear comfortable clothing and come ready to work on that bod!

—◆— The “Core Group”¹ got together in April to recap the March meeting and make some plans for future MSSG meetings. Please contact any of us if you would like to be a member of the group and/or if you would like to volunteer to MC or coordinate a program - we are not an exclusionary group and, in fact, can use (and need) all of the help we can get!

Synopsis of topics discussed / decisions:

- a) There will not be a Garage Sale this year - no one is available to make the plans before it gets too warm.
- b) We will arrange quarterly meetings, tentatively: May 12: “Build Your Best Beach Body”; July: Movie Night (at Masonic Lodge, downtown??); early in September: Annual Potluck; Late September/early October: Dr. Derek Teet, DC DACNB, on nutrition; December: Christmas Dinner.
- c) One of our goals is to keep our meetings light and lively, as each of “the group” has heard non-members decline to attend because our meetings are so “depressing.” Yes, they have attended at least one of our meetings. We would like to keep the meetings focused on positive and upbeat subjects. We all recognize, while it’s unwelcome, MS is not the worst thing that could happen to us. We all have different physical / emotional challenges but, overall, we can still have a productive, happy life. The meetings are for the support and education of all members. We all (new members, especially) need to hear positive attitudes and outlooks for MSers. It is better to recognize what one can do rather than what one can't. While it is okay to express a condition, we would prefer not to dwell on individual complaints. Please keep away from the “poor me” comments.
- d) Postage costs continue to rise. Would YOU like to continue receiving the newsletters? IF SO, please send your e-mail address myMSSG@hotmail.com.
- e) Many of our members are still working. Is there any interest in having evening meetings? IF SO, please let us know, at myMSSG@hotmail.com, and we will see what we can do about setting them up.

—◆— There was a good turnout at the March 21st meeting, and a short questionnaire was filled out by people in attendance. (Not everyone returned the questionnaire and, of those returned, not all questions were answered.) The replies to some of the questions are as follows:

“Do you prefer to receive communication from MSSG by” mail (3); e-mail (5); phone (2)

“Neurologist” Dr. Panna Shah, Flagstaff (3); Dr. Darry Johnson, Peoria (4); Dr. Dale Schultz, Phoenix (1); Barrows Neurological Institute, Phoenix (1)

“Meds” Copaxone (4); Baclofen (3); Avonex (1); Ampyra (1); Low Dose Naltrexone (LDN) (4); Randine (1); Neurontin (2); (various anti-depressants) (4); Actonel (1); Lyrica (2); Tizanidine (1); None (2)

¹ Contact MyMssg@hotmail.com for more information

“Would you be willing to discuss your neurologist and/or the meds you take if someone wants information about them” Yes (all!!²)

“What type of speaker/program would you like to have presented at MSSG” SSDI / Social Security/disability lawyer; adaptive/assistive devices; cognitive/emotional issues; nutritional/physical/occupational/relaxation therapy; pain management; home modification programs; Medicare; what to expect at rehab; updates on MS; fun programs (bowling, movie night with popcorn & pie, etc.); medical marijuana.

“What part can you take in future meetings: “Whatever I can do”; “. . . I could make a call or two to set-up a meeting, if needed”; “As needed, mailing, food, background”; “Ask me”; “Help however I can”; blank (3)

“Any other suggestions / recommendations for our group?” “Fun activities - bowling?, movie night, meet for pie and conversation, exercise class”; “road trip: Library for the Blind / Handicapped in Phoenix”; have quarterly meetings (4); “STAY HAPPY!!” (1)

The Flagstaff MS Support Group has a web site! Look for meeting information, Core Group e-mail address, and links to AARP Brain Games, the SSDI Handbook, VolunteerMatch, etc., websites, at: FlagstaffMSSupport.org. Thank you, Todd, for creating and maintaining the site!

Quote of the Month – “For attractive lips, speak words of kindness. For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people. For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry. For beautiful hair, let a child run his/her fingers through it once a day. For poise, walk with the knowledge that you never walk alone. People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed, and redeemed; never throw out anyone. Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, you will find one at the end of each of your arms. As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands; one for helping yourself, and the other for helping others.”

Upcoming teleconferences - it’s easy to participate; no RSVP required; 1-800-823-1880. Call today to set up a reminder call so you don’t miss the teleconference, or simply call in on your choice of teleconference nights to participate.

“Managing Spasticity: Managing spasticity can help improve your coordination and energy level. We’ll discuss several treatment options that can help foster freedom of movement through reduced muscle tension and stiffness. Speakers: Matthew McCoyd, MD — Assistant Professor of Neurology, Loyola University Medical Center, Chicago, IL; Tresa M. — MS Peer”

Teleconference Dates: Wednesday, May 25, 2011 – 8:00 PM ET, 5:00 PM PT

Thursday, May 26, 2011 – 9:00 PM ET, 6:00 PM PT

“What to Look for in a Therapy: Making a therapy choice is personal. Whether you’re concerned with the track record of therapies or how they impact the immune system we will review some important factors you should consider when making treatment decisions.

Speakers: Ben Thrower, MD – Medical Director, Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute, Shepherd Center, Atlanta, GA; Linda M. — MS Peer”

Teleconference Dates: Tuesday, June 28, 2011 – 8:00 PM ET, 5:00 PM PT

Wednesday, June 29, 2011 – 9:00 PM ET, 6:00 PM PT

(Editor’s note: these teleconferences are sponsored by Shared Solutions [Copaxone Support Group], as these are all I am aware of; however, no product preference is given. Talks usually last about an hour and the last part of the program is an open question and answer period; if you would like to ask a question, listen closely to the instructions given at the beginning of the program and put your request in early.)

² Contact MyMssg@hotmail.com if you would like to talk to someone about their neurologist and/or meds.