



National MS Society Information Sourcebook

www.nationalmssociety.org/sourcebook

Medical Histories

A medical history is an essential part of the diagnosis and treatment of a patient. Very often, a tentative diagnosis may be made on the basis of a medical history.

Histories give the physician important information about:

- Onset of symptoms
- Type of symptoms
- Pattern of symptoms
- Factors affecting symptoms
- Additional treatment or diagnostic evaluation that the person may have undergone
- Other ongoing medical problems
- Medications the person is currently taking
- Allergies to medications
- Past history of surgery or trauma
- Health of immediate and extended family
- Diet and eating habits
- Bowel and bladder habits
- Sexual practices
- Exposure to environmental hazards
- Travel to any exotic lands associated with certain diseases.

Be as Accurate and Truthful as Possible

It is important to be as accurate and truthful as possible when giving your medical history. Often, a physician will ask permission to obtain records from physicians who have previously treated a person. Bear in mind that any information given to a physician is held in confidence, and may only be released to others with permission from the patient.

See also...

Sourcebook

- Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF)
- Clinics/Comprehensive Care Centers
- Diagnosis
- Diagnosis Of Demyelinating Diseases
- Early Intervention (Disease Management Consensus Statement—Summary)
- Evoked Potentials
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Society Web Resources

- Diagnosis of MS
www.nationalmssociety.org/Diagnosis
- For People Newly Diagnosed
www.nationalmssociety.org/NewlyDiagnosed

For Healthcare Professionals

- Disease Management Consensus Statement
www.nationalmssociety.org/ExpertOpinionPapers
- Tip Sheet: McDonald Diagnostic Criteria for MS
www.nationalmssociety.org/ClinicianResources

Books

Kalb R. (ed.). *Multiple Sclerosis: A Guide for Families* (3rd ed.). New York: Demos Medical Publishing, 2005

—Ch. 3 The Family's Relationship with the Physician and the Healthcare Team

Kalb R. (ed.). *Multiple Sclerosis: The Questions You Have; The Answers You Need* (3rd ed.). New York: Demos Medical Publishing, 2004

—Ch. 3 Neurology

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is proud to be a source of information about multiple sclerosis. Our comments are based on professional advice, published experience, and expert opinion, but do not represent individual therapeutic recommendations or prescription. For specific information and advice, consult your personal physician.

To contact your chapter, call **1-800-FIGHT-MS** (1-800-344-4867) or visit the National MS Society web site: www.nationalmssociety.org.