



SPECIALIST ONLINE EXERCISE PROGRAMMES

Graduation Resources

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MoveSmart MS

You've Graduated!

About this E-Book

Congratulations for graduating from your Move Smart MS programme! Well done for logging on, for exercising, for taking part in conversations, for learning and offering advice. We hope that the programme has been useful for you in improving your MS symptoms, and in participating in the activities you want to do.

To help you to maintain your physical activity and the healthy exercise habit that you have started, we have put together this e-book to summarise the key learning, add information on other symptoms that weren't addressed in detail, and to provide you with strategies for keeping going including some exercise videos.

We hope that you find this book helpful, and that it will serve as a useful reminder in the future of the learning from the programme.



Susan Coote, Tina O'Connor, Amy O'Mahony and Enya Breen

MS Ireland Contacts by Region

CHO	Counties	Worker	Phone	E-mail
1	Donegal (** HSE have case management services for Sligo Leitrim Charlie and Catherine will have contact details, and the MS Therapy Centre in Sligo a standalone service).	Catherine Peoples	087 2663570	catherinep@ms-society.ie
			087 6334993	charliem@ms-society.ie
		Charlie McLaughlin		
	Cavan Monaghan	Sabrina Brennan	086 7966465	sabrinab@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	074 9189027	northwest@ms-society.ie
2	Galway	Aidan Larkin	087 2500726	aidanl@ms-society.ie
		John MacDonald	087 2502009	johnm@ms-society.ie
	Mayo, Roscommon	Mags Ryan	087 2502031	magsr@ms-society.ie
		Regional Office	Staff	087 2502031
3	Limerick, North Tipperary	Mary McCusker	086 1448767	marym@ms-society.ie
	Clare	John MacDonald	087 2502009	johnm@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	061 303 802	midwest@ms-society.ie
4	Cork	Patricia Lucey	087 7727015	patricial@ms-society.ie
		Aideen Connolly	Mat Leave	aideenc@ms-society.ie
	Kerry	Siobhan Lynch	087 2663489	siobhanl@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	021 4300523	southern@ms-society.ie

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5	South Tipperary, Kilkenny	Katie Hourigan	087 2663564	katieh@ms-society.ie
	Carlow, Waterford	Deirdre Gowney	086 6061645	deirdreg@ms-society.ie
	Wexford	Una Goan	087 7375298	unag@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	056 77 7771	southeast@ms-society.ie
6	Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East	Geraldine Dunne	087 2484267	geraldined@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	01 490 5933	eca@ms-society.ie
7	Kildare, West Wicklow, Dublin West, Dublin South City, Dublin South West	Rosanna Duke	087 2482462	rosannad@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	01 490 5933	swa@ms-society.ie
8	Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath	Mary Leonard	087 2663659	maryl@ms-society.ie
	Louth, Meath	Aoife Lambe	086 4613369	aoifel@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	090 647 1137	midlands@ms-society.ie
9	Dublin North	Mary Ryan	087 2482454	maryr@ms-society.ie
	Dublin North Central, Dublin North West	Sean Kinsella	087 2500563	seank@ms-society.ie
	Regional Office	Staff	01 490 5933	na@ms-society.ie

Maintaining Your New Fitness Routine

Goal Setting

Goal setting provides a focus that drives success. In the programme, you would have learned about S.M.A.A.R.T. goals. As a reminder, this stands for:

Specific
Measurable
Action - Orientated
Addjustable
Realistic
Time Bound

When goals are set keeping this framework in mind, greater outcomes are reached rather than activities simply being practiced. We would encourage you to set your own S.M.A.A.R.T. goals and make note of these.

Activity Logging

It can take time to reach your physical activity goals. Using an activity log is a good way to measure your progress so you can see small improvements over time. This can help give you a sense of satisfaction, boost your confidence and keep you committed to regular activity. Consistently keeping up your physical activity habit is an excellent achievement, and an activity log is a great way of reminding yourself that you are successfully incorporating beneficial exercise into your day-to-day life. There are many different ways to log your activity. You may use a diary, an app or the handout that you would have received during the class. The best method is the one which you find easiest to use consistently.

Self Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the belief that one can achieve a specific goal. It is one of the strongest factors associated with being active long term. There are four different types of self-efficacy that we talked about:

1. Mastery Experience - seeing that you have achieved something, and knowing that you can do it again. The feeling you get when you do some exercise will help motivate you to get going again or to continue.

2. Vicarious Experience - Witnessing other people, that are like you, successfully completing a task can help you to believe in yourself and your abilities.

3. Social Persuasion - Having social support and getting verbal encouragement from others helps people to overcome self-doubt and focus on giving their best effort to the task at hand.

4. Physiological Indicators - Changes in strength, fitness, mood and how we feel can provide another motivating factor.

Tips to Increase your Self Efficacy

- Celebrate your successes.
- Observe others and use them for inspiration.
- Have a support network that will encourage you.
- Log your activity to remind yourself of your progress.
- Set SMAART goals.

"Doing exercise, particularly a small walk outside in the fresh air, makes me feel 'free' of my MS, even if it's just for a small while"

— MoveSmart Participant

Exercise General Tips

Start small and gradually build up activity levels – it is important not to take on too much too soon to prevent fatigue or injury, especially if you are new to an exercise. Start small, with a few reps and movements done well before you progress. We recommend checking with a physiotherapist to discuss to best exercise progressions for you.

Hydration – make sure you are well hydrated and have a bottle of water nearby. If you are wondering how much to drink, we recommend drinking enough so that your pee is light/straw colored.

Staying cool – Wear light, breathable clothing, make sure the room is well ventilated if indoors or shaded if outdoors. Fans, ice packs and cooling vests may be helpful but be careful of ice burns – check your skin regularly for redness to avoid damage.

Good footwear – Make sure your footwear is well fitted, with good grip on the sole and the laces tied. If you have a dictus for support please use it as needed (Remember – the hook faces towards you).

Monitor your intensity - Check in with yourself, exercise should be challenging enough for you to gain the benefits, but not so difficult that you are unable to go about the rest of your day. Aim for moderate intensity exercise (4-6 on a scale of 1-10). Remember that how hard an exercise feels can change from day to day depending on how you feel. Something you did Monday for 10 minutes that felt like a 5/10, might feel like an 8/10 or 9/10 on a day you feel fatigued, stressed or too warm. (RPE CHART). Moderate intensity walking means that you can talk but not sing, or that you are going at a pace of 100 steps per minute so a 10-minute walk would have about 1000 steps.

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Habit stacking - Incorporate exercise into your day in smaller chunks, you don't have to do it all at once. Some participants recommend taking a few minutes to squat or march while waiting for the kettle to boil. Remember that every bit of exercise no matter how small is beneficial.

Working with a personal trainer/gym – If you choose to exercise with a personal trainer or attend a local gym, you are the expert on your own body. Be sure to tell them exactly what you want them to know about your symptoms and condition so that they can adapt exercise for you appropriately. If unsure, always ask your physiotherapist who will be happy to consult with your chosen fitness professional.

RPE Scale	Rate of Perceived Exertion
10	Max Effort Activity Feels almost impossible to keep going. Completely out of breath, unable to talk. Cannot maintain for more than a very short time.
9	Very Hard Activity Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity. Can barely breath and speak only a few words
7-8	Vigorous Activity Borderline uncomfortable. Short of breath, can speak a sentence.
4-6	Moderate Activity Breathing heavily, can hold short conversation. Still somewhat comfortable, but becoming noticeably more challenging.
2-3	Light Activity Feels like you can maintain for hours. Easy to breathe and carry a conversation
1	Very Light Activity Hardly any exertion, but more than sleeping, watching TV, etc

Monitor your exercise intensity with this RPE chart

Exercise Class Videos

In the following pages you will find links to some exercise videos that you can follow along with.

If you are unsure of what level of classes are suitable for you, seated classes are the best option until you can get advice from your doctor or physiotherapist.

When following these videos, **please make sure you are exercising in your safe space** where you would normally have completed your classes. Have a support on either side of you and behind you in case you feel unsteady.

Some of the exercises in the videos may be unfamiliar to you. Please only do the exercises that you feel steady and comfortable doing.

Please make sure you have someone in your home who knows that you are exercising, or that you have a fully charged phone nearby in case an accident happens.

While online classes are a great option for people who like to exercise at home, do get in touch with your local MS Ireland Branch or Regional Office to find out more about onsite classes and activities.

Remember: Safety First!

Seated Classes

Please click the pictures below to watch the videos.



[Simple seated exercise workout | Move more with MS](#)



[Upper body tone, Move it for MS - MS Trust](#)



While online classes are a great option for people who like to exercise at home, do get in touch with your local MS Ireland Branch or Regional Office to find out more about onsite classes and activities.

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MS Active Together | Seated Pilates Workout for MS



NCHPAD Exercising from Home: Strength & Cardio



If you are unsure of what level of classes are suitable for you, seated classes are the best option until you can get advice from your doctor or physiotherapist.

Standing Classes

Please click the pictures below to watch the videos.



Exercising at Home: Strength and Cardio.



.Improve your balance and stability workout | Move more with MS



Only complete these classes if you have previously exercised in standing and are safe, comfortable and able to maintain your balance.

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Low impact lower body workout | Move more with MS



Multiple Sclerosis Auckland Exercise Class Group 1
Aug 2020

This is a high level class and contains some floor exercises. If you have completed the Better Balance class, this video is not suitable for you.



Remember you also have your Home Exercise Programme to complete. These videos do not replace this, they are just a useful addition to your fitness routine if you find you enjoy having a video to follow along with.

Fatigue and Exercise

Fatigue can impact every area of our lives, including the desire to exercise. Fatigue is complex and can feel different for everyone which can make it difficult to describe. Below we have explained the types of fatigue that are common in people with neurological conditions, and some tips and tricks to exercise well whilst managing your fatigue.

Central Fatigue

Directly related to your neurological condition, an overwhelming sense of tiredness not related to participation in activity or exercise.

Cognitive Fatigue/Brain Fog

Feeling fuzzy like you cannot concentrate or focus, decrease in memory or ability to pay attention.

Peripheral/Motor Fatigue

Fatigue that occurs in specific muscle groups, like your hands after typing or legs when walking or standing for a short time. Limits the amount of activity that you can do.



Click on the image to the left to download a copy of the MS Ireland Fatigue Management Booklet

Fatigue Management

Keep a Fatigue Diary – keeping a diary to rate your fatigue level throughout the day can be useful to recognize patterns in your energy levels and to determine if your fatigue is made worse by specific activities, time of day, quality of sleep or heat. This will help you plan your day and prioritize exercise at times when you are at your best.

Do a little, rest a little – Rome was not built in a day. Remember that you can break up tasks into smaller activities to complete in short bouts. It is important to rest BEFORE you get tired to avoid undue fatigue. A rest could be anything, from having a cup of tea to sitting down for 5 mins or a nap – whatever suits you.

Organize your living and workspaces - Set yourself up for the path of least resistance! Keep frequently used items lower down in cupboards or at arm's reach. Gather everything you need for one task in one area before you begin rather than having to cross over and back e.g., cooking dinner, pots, pans, veg, spices, meat etc.

Avoid Boom and Bust - When we are feeling good, or the weather is nice we all can have the tendency to take on too much. Stick to your plan and prioritize tasks based on your 'need to do' versus your 'want to do'. If you find you have done too much – that is ok. Use it as a learning experience, give yourself permission to have the occasional duvet day to recover and then get back on track.

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Getting a good night's sleep – Sleeping well can help you to feel alert and refreshed during the day. Sleep hygiene is the term used to describe healthy sleep habits that may help improve your ability to fall asleep and remain asleep through the night. Smart sleep habits that may improve your sleep hygiene include:

- Having a consistent nightly routine that allows time for relaxing activities
- Getting up and going to bed around the same time each day
- Sleeping in a dark, cool room
- Limiting screen time at least 60 minutes before bed
- Limiting caffeine intake in the evening time

Exercise - There is strong evidence that exercise helps keep your body working at its best and can improve strength, fitness and mood. Endurance exercise in particular (exercise which gets your heart rate up) has been shown to have positive benefits for fatigue. By improving your endurance, over time you will find that some activities may not be as tiring, or that you can do more activity at the same intensity level.



Online fatigue-management course

[Click here to learn more about the online FACETS Fatigue Management Course.](#)

Mobility Aids

There are many types of mobility aids available, each designed with a specific purpose. Some assist with weakness, while others are designed for people with tightness, spasms, or stiffness. It is best to consult with your physiotherapist first to find an aid that is most suitable for you.

Below is a selection of what is available. It is important to remember that these are not recommendations for you, these are examples of what is possible so that you can start a conversation with your physiotherapist. Your primary care physiotherapist may be able to provide you with an aid, or they will be able to inform you of any funding that may be available to you with your medical or long-term disability card.

For Drop Foot

Drop foot can be caused by weakness or stiffness. Choosing the right aid for your needs, fatigue levels, and the activity that you are doing is important. If you are unsure, consult a physiotherapist.



Dictus Splint

A dictus splint uses a spring action from a rubber band and hook to assist in lifting your foot when walking. A dictus is worn on the outside of your shoe and hooks on your laces.



Ankle Foot Orthosis

AFO's are less flexible than a dictus and hold the foot in a more rigid position to prevent it from dropping. AFO's are worn directly on your leg.

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To Give Stability When Walking



Walking Stick



Walking Poles



Crutches



Rollator or Walker

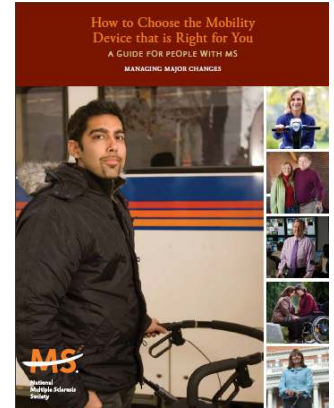


Choosing The Correct Aid For You

This booklet may give you more guidance about which aid will be most suitable for you. If you have any further questions, please consult your physiotherapist.

Click this link to read the booklet:

[National Multiple Sclerosis Society - How to Choose the Mobility Device that is Right For You Brochure](#)



Using your Aid Correctly

It will take practice to use any aid properly. Research suggests that the more aids you have the more likely you are to fall. This is probably due to lack of practice or that people living with a neurological condition are not taught how to use them safely or pick the wrong one for that task and environment.

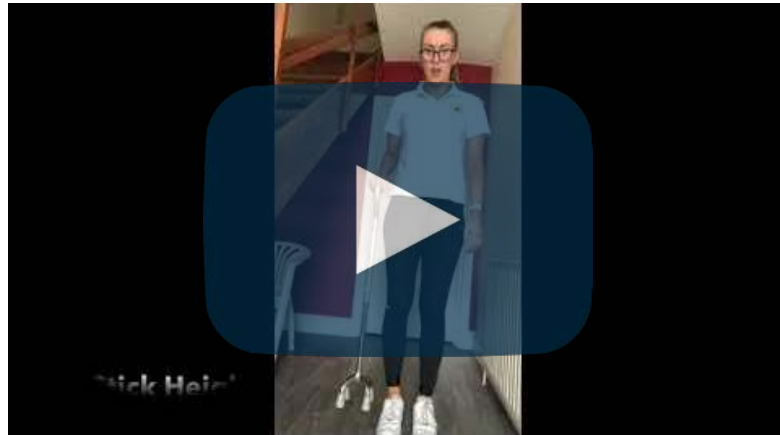
Tips:

- Hold your walking stick in opposite hand to your weaker side.
- If using a walking stick, the stick moves forward at the same time as the weaker leg. Then the stronger leg follows.
- It is important to regularly check the rubber ferrule at the bottom of your walking aid for signs of wear or damage. These can usually be replaced at a local pharmacy or by your local physiotherapist.
- Stick Height: The handle should be set at the height of your wrist when your elbow is slightly bent.

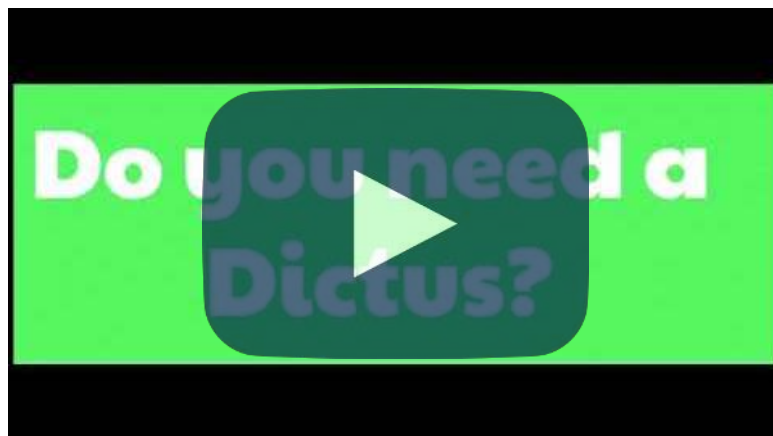
**“Good leg to heaven (up first)
Bad leg to hell (down first)”**

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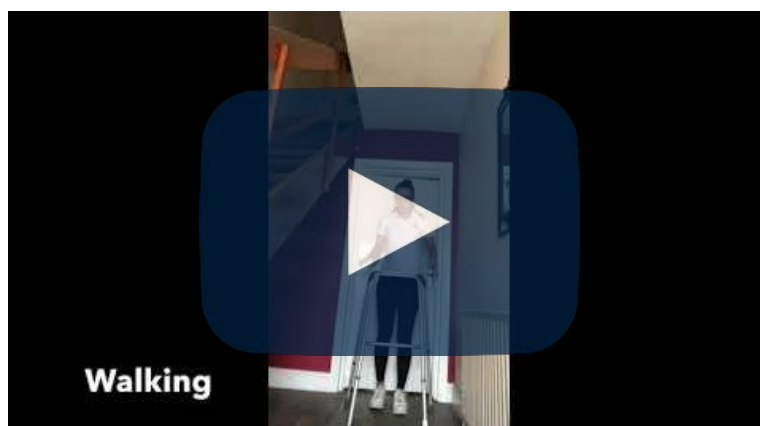
How to Use a Walking Stick



How to Use a Dictus Splint



How to Use a Zimmer Frame



Falls Management

Why are Falls an Issue?

Falls can have a significant impact on your physical and mental health.

Fear of falling is another important thing to think about, and although you may not have had a fall recently, if you have reduced your activity levels because of your falls risk, then this is also an issue that you can address.

If you have had a fall recently or are concerned about your risk of falls, you can seek help and advice from your GP and local physiotherapist. Your case will be prioritised and they will carry out a full assessment. You will also be able to discuss any falls you have had with them and say if it has had any impact on your health and wellbeing.

Identifying Falls Risk Factors

As you have learned and discussed throughout the programme, there may be a number of factors that contribute to your falls. These can be related to your behaviours and attitudes, activities, symptoms and environment, as you may remember from our **BAASE** diagram.

Below are some falls risk factors that may relate to you:

- Not using enough support when walking
- Being distracted by other activities
- Rushing
- Fatigue
- Clutter in the room
- Uneven surfaces
- Unfamiliar environments

How to Prevent Falls

There are many different ways to prevent falls, and the ones that will work for you will depend on your individual fall risk factors. The strategies below may remind you about what you have learned during the programme:

- **Slow down and concentrate** on the task you are doing.
- Have a '**balance first**' focus.
- **Activity analysis and modification** – Often, the day-to-day tasks that we carry out without too much thought can involve a lot more steps and tasks than we may initially think. Have a think about the different steps involved in activity you do and make a plan to modify this activity. This may be done by taking breaks, using support, changing the activity or asking for help.
- **Fatigue management** – see page **15**
- **Stop, scan and assess** your environment. Particularly in unfamiliar places, take your time, identify any hazards that may be present and make a plan to minimise the risks of these hazards before you start to move.
- Choose the **correct walking aid** for the level of support that you require – see page **17**

"Course was superb. I appreciate particularly how vulnerable I am to falls and I have made avoiding accidents my number one priority. I'm really grateful for this realisation".

— MoveSmart Participant

When you Have a Fall

Sometimes falls occur despite our best efforts. If you do fall at home, take these steps to get up:

- 1.** First, do not try to get up quickly (Getting up quickly may be your impulse due to embarrassment). Take a few minutes to check and make sure that you are not seriously injured.
- 2.** If you are hurt and alone, drag yourself to a telephone and call 999 or 112. (This is why is good to have a phone in more than one room or to carry a mobile phone)
- 3.** If you do not think that you are hurt, drag yourself to the closest piece of sturdy furniture (e.g. bed, sofa, heavy chair, or toilet). If you are outside, look for a stable object like a tree trunk, bench or car.

Getting Up and Down From The Floor

During the programme we provided you with a strategy to safely get back up after a fall. Remember to always have someone with you when you practice and to take each step at a time - you do not need to perform the full technique all in one go.

Click the picture **below** to remind yourself of this technique.



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Safe Falling Techniques

DO NOT PRACTICE THESE AT HOME!

These are strategies to use when you know you are about to fall or are falling.

In the interest of safety, do not attempt to practice falling. These are simply techniques to employ to reduce your injury risk if you do fall. Remember to **fall soft**, you may be more likely to injure yourself if you are tense and rigid.



Falling forwards:
'Bend and catch'



Falling sideways:
'Twist, bend and catch'
Turn into the direction of
the fall.



Falling backwards:
'Bend and Sit'
Bend at the hips and
knees to squat down and
fall on the fleshy part of
your bum.

Managing Urgency and Incontinence

Bladder Calming

Pelvic floor exercises and engagement

Drawing up your pelvic floor muscles as if you wish to stop yourself peeing or breaking wind. These muscles act as a sling and support the bladder –helping to calm that urgency and prevent leakage.

Crossing your legs

This applies pressure to your pelvic area which helps calm the sensation of urgency and can be useful in situations where you cannot access the bathroom (i.e. driving or in a meeting for work). Placing a rolled-up towel between your legs, to apply pressure to this area, will also have the same effect!

Distraction

Things you can do which focus your nervous system on other stimuli in order to distract from the signals that are triggering the sensation of 'urgency'

- Rubbing your lower back.
- Curling your toes.
- Doing heel raises or calf stretches.
- Placing pressure on your top lip: place your index finger along your top lip and apply firm pressure when you feel that sensation of 'urgency'

Behaviour modification

Think about the times when your urgency is 'triggered' (i.e. is it when you put your key into your front door when you come home; is it before you go for some exercise)

Once you have identified a trigger, try to change your behavior around this (i.e. when you get home, go in your back door instead of your front door; plan a bathroom break before you exercise and do loops of a route if needed to plan a bathroom break during long exercises as well.)

Bladder retaining

Make sure you take in the right amount of fluid that you need during the day. You may need to track what you drink in a day and the number of times you needed the bathroom or times you experienced urgency or incontinence.

Remember, strong urine irritates the bladder and increases the urgency, as much as drinking too much liquid

If you had a few episodes of urgency/incontinence, you may have been drinking too much or too little it will take a bit of time to figure out what is the right amount of liquid for you in a day.

Drinks that are high in caffeine may be an irritant for your bladder. Keep track of your bouts or urgency and see if you can link this with drinking a specific drink (i.e. Coca Cola, Coffee, Tea).

Regular bathroom breaks: try to 'schedule' a pattern for using the bathroom during the day (i.e. every 3 hours) to ensure that you use the bathroom you are not rushed and have plenty of time to empty your bladder fully. This will reduce the feeling of urgency and risk of leakage.



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