

Lighten the load



Adaptive tools can make things a little easier when you're living with multiple sclerosis.

by James Townsend

Simple household tasks can be a chore for people with multiple sclerosis who might be dealing with symptoms such as muscle weakness or mobility issues. Fortunately, a wealth of adaptive tools and tips are at hand.

Eating and drinking

Spill-proof cup

Sometimes holding or drinking from a glass or cup can be a struggle. A wide-grip, spill-proof cup may be the answer. Search "[spill-proof cup](#)" online.

Hydration packs and flexible straws

Hydration packs can be worn or mounted on a wheelchair (or any chair) with various lengths of sipping tubes for easier access. Prices range from \$60 to more than \$100. Packages of 28-inch-long flexible straws are available for about \$12. Search "[hydration pack for wheelchairs](#)" and "[flexible or bendable straws](#)" online.

Clothes protector

Protect your clothing while eating with waterproof and washable clothes protectors. Around \$15. Search "[dining clothes protector](#)" online.

Hand clip

Are you having trouble gripping, eating or using cooking utensils? Hand clips will fit almost any utensil. About \$15. Some utensil sets also have non-slip handles already attached. Search "[utensil hand clip](#)" online.

Jar opener

A multi-purpose, battery-operated automatic can and jar opener can be a big help when you have limited hand, wrist or forearm strength. Around \$20. Search "[automatic jar opener](#)" online.

Cookware

Try lightweight pots and pans for cooking and rocker knives with rounded blades for easier cutting. Prices vary. Search "[lightweight cookware](#)" and "[adaptive kitchen knives](#)" online.

In the bathroom

A number of items are available for personal hygiene.

Toothbrushing

Electric or battery-powered toothbrushes are easy to grip and clean more easily than a standard toothbrush. From about \$65. Search "[electric toothbrush](#)" online.

Flossing

Choose a big-handled floss holder for flossing. From \$6. Search "[dental floss holder](#)" online.

Bathing

Adaptive devices for the shower and bath include long-handled shower brushes, shower and bath seats, safety handholds, non-skid bathmats and ADA-compliant faucets. Search online for individual products by name or search "[adaptive shower aids](#)" or "[daily living aids](#)."

Around the home



Reaching tools can help with getting items that are placed

high on a shelf. Photos: iStock

Reaching tools

When bending to pick something up or reaching for something on a high shelf is difficult, try reaching tools. Around \$15 and up. Search online for “[reach extender](#)” or “[grabber tool](#).”

Work aids

Computers and the internet are an essential part of modern life. A large trackball mouse can help with arm and wrist motion. About \$35. Search “[trackball mouse](#)” online.

A variety of adjustable tables and accessories are available for wheelchair users, including trays that easily attach and detach. Prices vary. Search “[detachable tray](#)” or “[wheelchair tray](#)” online.

Typing aid button pushers fit easily over the hand and allow you to push one key (or any button) at a time. About \$25. Search “[typing aid button pusher](#)” online.

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