

# @Momentum



## Readers sound off on diet, winter sports and travel.

### More diet research, please



“[MS and diet: finding the links](#)” (Winter 2014-15) really interested me. Since February 2014, I have been following a diet based on the one mentioned by Dr. Terry Wahls, who has multiple sclerosis and has written about using a paleo approach toward MS. Not too long after I started this way of eating, the pains I had in my mouth went away and I was very encouraged. But since my initial improvements, I have plateaued—no more improvements. More research definitely needs to be done with diet, as there are promising aspects.

**Shannon Pulliam, Oregon**

### Doctor’s diet

I wanted to send a note thanking you for your wonderful [article on diet](#) in **Momentum**. I am a physician who has been living with MS for nearly 20 years and I credit my amendment to lifestyle behaviors—which include an optimal diet and exercise—for my improved health

outcomes. It is an important article and I hope many patients and their families gain insight and adopt measures to improve overall quality of life.

**Dr. Saray Stancic, New Jersey**

### **Winter wonders**

Once again an article in **Momentum** has inspired and motivated me, this time when I was sad about not being able to continue to participate in winter activities. You showed me a way ("[Ready, set, snow!](#)" Winter 2014-15)! A few years ago it was your article about how to continue bike riding. I need to remember that it's not "I can't," but "How can I?" Thank you for always being there for me during my 25 years with MS.

**Janice Chussil, Oregon**

## **Let's hear it! Share your thoughts and comments about this issue's stories.**

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- Or send mail to **Momentum** Editor, National MS Society, 900 S. Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, Colorado, 80209. Letters to the editor must include your name and a way for our staff to contact you. Letters should be no more than 100 words and may be edited.

### **Get even more organized**

Sarah Markel's article, "[Organize your medical records](#)," (Winter 2014-15) was excellent. As a now-retired occupational therapist who has lived with MS for 50-plus years, I would like to offer another tip. We all know that getting organized to see a new doctor can be daunting. I always write a letter to the doctor and bring it with me.

I bring either a paper or a digital copy for myself, too. (If it's digital, I can enlarge the type to my liking.) In my letter, I share my hopes for this visit. Then I ask any questions I'm hoping to have answered, and leave room after each one, so I can write or enter the answers as we go. I take notes on anything else from the visit separately.

For subsequent visits, I write letters based on the previous visit's letter. Since they are on my computer, I just make a copy of the last one and modify it, saving it with the date of my new visit. I remind the doctor (and myself) how things were the last time, which gives me a basis for describing how things are now. There may be categories such as my physical health, my mental health, lab and other test results, the results of any referrals s/he made, equipment or supplies which had been prescribed, including how any new medication is working, or pertinent changes in my life situation. Then I add any new questions, numbered and in bold

or underlined type.

Every physician has loved these letters; some have passed the idea on to their other patients.

I love them, too. With very little effort on my part, nothing gets missed. I don't ramble, stumble or get confused, forgetful or stressed about getting everything covered in very little time. And my letters become part of my medical record.

**Jane E. Harmon, OTR, ret., Texas**



Illustration by Dave Cutler

### **Recruiting help**

I wanted to thank Robin Rubenstein for writing "[Letting the cracks show](#)" (Winter 2014-15). I am a list person; being a spouse to a military man, it's a must. I wake up at 5:30 every morning, take my medicine, do my devotional and pray.

Next, I make breakfast for my husband and two boys, send them off to their day, then get myself ready for work. Once home again, I make dinner, clean the house, do laundry, take care of dinner dishes. Some days I have felt like a failure because I couldn't do everything on my list.

I was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS in March 2005. I felt the same way as Ms. Rubenstein—that if I asked for help I would look weak. My husband, my pastor and my church family now know that when I say I am "OK," they should ask me, "Now, what can we do to help?"

**Kimberly Reformat, Georgia**

### **No-fly zone**

I read with interest your article on flying (“[’Tis the season for holiday travel](#),” Winter 2014-15). I have flown several times but now hesitate doing so because of the conditions on planes.

I need a wheelchair now, and the airlines have only a very small wheeled seat to use aboard the plane. Once, when I could still walk a little, I called my airline prior to the flight. I said that with help, I could walk about three steps at a time, and that I needed to be near a bathroom; still, they put me 12 rows back. “Near” may be a relative term. I learned I need to be very specific. The attendant, once she realized how much assistance I needed, said, “You mean you can’t walk at all.”

We cannot afford first class, but I think disabled people and their caregivers should be seated there for convenience. That, along with proper staff training, would avert so many problems. I also suggest people with MS call the airlines about a week in advance to make sure that arrangements are completed.

**Chris Whiting, Pennsylvania**

### **Travel, made easy**

As I read “[’Tis the season for holiday travel](#),” I had some thoughts to share. Last summer when I traveled to Seattle for my niece’s college graduation, I put everything I might need for a week in a box and shipped it considerably ahead of time. In my large purse, I took several days’ medication and a few more changes for my urostomy appliance (a urine collection device), along with a letter my doctor wrote explaining my need for my meds. What a relief it was not to have a suitcase or even a carry-on to deal with!

**Jesse Van Volkenburgh, Tennessee**