

Fads and fiction preventing Australians with MS from making lifestyle changes to improve their health and wellbeing

30 May 2025: Nearly all Australians living with multiple sclerosis (MS) want to make lifestyle changes that could improve their MS symptoms and overall quality of life, but new survey data released today has found that nearly three in four struggle to identify credible, safe and relevant information.

MS Australia's national *MS Community Priorities Survey* found 96 per cent of people with MS are interested in making lifestyle changes, but 73 per cent of those surveyed say they find it difficult to access or understand reliable information regarding modifiable lifestyle factors such as physical activity, diet, and health supplements.

Living Well with MS has been developed in direct response to this need, empowering people living with MS to take control of their health through informed lifestyle choices.

Launched today on World MS Day, this resource reflects strong demand from the MS community, with 98 per cent of survey respondents saying they would be more likely to make lifestyle changes if they had access to an easy-to-follow, MS-specific guide based on the latest evidence.

MS Australia's Head of Research, Dr Julia Morahan, said that the *MS Community Priorities Survey* results make clear that people living with MS want information they can trust, something clear, relevant to their experience and grounded in evidence.

"*Living Well with MS* is one way we are responding to that feedback, by working with researchers, healthcare professionals, and the MS community to deliver something genuinely useful and empowering."

Developed in collaboration with neurologists, researchers, MS nurses, service providers, and people living with MS, *Living Well with MS* is an updated resource that combines the latest research with practical advice to support informed lifestyle choices.

The guide covers 11 modifiable lifestyle factors, including physical activity, nutrition, sleep and vitamin D, and offers strategies grounded in the best available research, complemented by expert advice and practical suggestions.

It is designed to support people living with MS to make informed decisions and work collaboratively with their healthcare providers as their needs evolve.

Dr Jo Gamble, MS Australia's Research Coordinator and lead author of the guide, said the resource draws on the latest scientific evidence to support informed lifestyle choices.

"This guide brings together the current research on how lifestyle factors may influence MS, translating it into practical information for people living with the condition," Dr Gamble said.

"Evidence shows that changes in areas such as physical activity, diet, sleep and mental wellbeing can play a role in managing symptoms, reducing relapses, supporting long-term health and improving quality of life."

The guide recognises that navigating lifestyle information can be overwhelming and aims to provide clear, credible recommendations backed by science and lived experience.

Living Well with MS was shaped in collaboration with the MS community through MS Australia's Lived Experience Expert Panel (LEEP). The panel's members bring diverse perspectives and personal experiences to inform the organisation's initiatives across all areas.

Insights from the panel have been woven throughout the guide to ensure that the content reflects the real-world challenges and decisions faced by people living with MS.

LEEP member Deanna Renee said that when she was first diagnosed, it was difficult to know what advice to trust or where to begin.

"There was so much information out there, but I had no idea what was reliable or relevant to me," she said.

"Having a guide like this, based on evidence and written with lived experience in mind, is reassuring. It helps make sense of the options and supports people at every stage of their MS journey."

Living Well with MS will be launched today at a World MS Day event hosted at Government House by Her Excellency the Governor General, Ms Sam Mostyn, who is a Patron of MS Australia.

The event brings together people living with MS, researchers, health professionals, and policymakers to celebrate the MS community and highlight proactive approaches to supporting health and wellbeing through lifestyle choices.

The 2025 World MS Day campaign is *My MS Diagnosis*, which calls for earlier and more accurate diagnosis and improved MS training for healthcare professionals, making this guide especially valuable for people who are newly diagnosed and seeking clear, trustworthy guidance.

Living Well with MS is now available to download from the [MS Australia website](https://www.msaustralia.org.au).

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