

'MIND' diet can help preserve brain in people with multiple sclerosis

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A diet designed to boost brain health appears to benefit people with

multiple sclerosis (MS), new research suggests.

For the study, a team from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City examined 185 people diagnosed with MS within the past five years. Each had MRI brain scans and responded to detailed questionnaires.

The upshot: Those who ate more of the "good" foods from a [brain-health](#) eating regimen known as the MIND [diet](#) and fewer "bad" ones tended to have more preserved tissue in a critical relay station in the brain called the thalamus.

The study also found a link between eating more full-fat dairy products and fewer MS brain lesions. Eating omega-3 [fatty acids](#) from fish also had brain benefits.

The MIND diet combines aspects of the Mediterranean diet and the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet.

MIND is short for Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay. The diet is designed to benefit [brain](#) health, and past studies have suggested it may help prevent Alzheimer's disease and help preserve thinking skills in older adults.

Foods considered "good" include leafy vegetables, berries, nuts and fish, and those considered "bad" include fried foods, butter, cheese, red and processed meats and sweets.

About 1 million Americans have MS, a central nervous system disorder with symptoms that can range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. Most people are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50. The disease affects women three times as often as men. There is currently no cure.

Dr. Ilana Katz Sand, a neurologist, led the study.

The study had a couple of key limitations: Research was restricted to patients in the early stages of MS and it took only a one-time snapshot.

But the findings provide additional evidence about the impact of diet and nutrition on outcomes for people with MS, researchers said. They will continue to follow participants to determine whether healthy diets continue to have benefits as MS progresses.

The findings were recently published recently in the journal *MS and Related Disorders*.

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more information about [multiple sclerosis](#).

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