

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/neurofrontiers/strategies-to-safeguard-brain-health-in-ms/54774/>

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Strategies to Safeguard Brain Health in MS

Announcer:

You're listening to *Neurofrontiers* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll hear from Dr. Christopher Lock, who will be discussing how to protect brain health in patients with multiple sclerosis. Dr. Lock is a Clinical Associate Professor of Neurology at Stanford University in Palo Alto California and Clinical Trials Director of the Stanford Multiple Sclerosis and Neuroimmunology Program.

Let's hear from him now.

Dr. Lock:

In terms of the strategies that are promising for protecting brain health and cognitive function, there are the basic things that really apply to everyone, not just people with MS. So exercise is beneficial. It has many benefits and neuroprotective effects.

Keeping the brain active, so to keep learning throughout one's life, keeping socially engaged, as we're social creatures, that's good for the brain. Correcting things like visual loss and hearing, so we get the input from the outside world. Correcting any vascular risk factors or optimizing those. So, if somebody has coexisting factors like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, treating those is protective for the brain in the longer term. It protects the blood vessels, and the blood vessels are living structures, so the walls of the vessels can be damaged over time if those conditions are left untreated. So any of those medical comorbidities are good to address.

At the present time, there's a lot of effort to find some means of protecting the nerves. The current medications or the current generation now are anti-inflammatory drugs, so they suppress the inflammation that can be injuring the nerves, but the nerves have to heal themselves. There are built-in repair mechanisms that everybody has, and the nerves can repair themselves, but the repair may be incomplete for reasons that aren't understood.

So, in the future, people are looking to therapies which will protect the axons and promote remyelination. So, down the road, we're all hoping that those drugs will come online and that they'll be available in the clinic. And we can imagine in the future, people will be on an anti-inflammatory medication to protect the nerves, but also some agent to promote repair.

Repair is something that's needed not just for MS, but in a lot of things we see in neurology at the present time. There isn't anything there, but I think there's a lot of hope for that. There are many different approaches being tried that are in various stages of clinical trial, and I think that those will be coming along.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Christopher Lock talking about strategies to protect cognitive function in multiple sclerosis patients. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Neurofrontiers* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!