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## Multiple Sclerosis

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_ Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

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- I. The client/caregiver can define multiple sclerosis.**
- It is a progressive degenerative disease caused by the destruction of the myelin sheath of the nerve tissue, which interrupts nerve impulses.
  - It is characterized by remissions and exacerbations.
  - It usually affects adults between the ages of 20 and 40 years.
- II. The client/caregiver can list factors that increase risk of multiple sclerosis.**
- Cool, temperate climates
  - Allergic reactions to infections
  - Familial tendency
  - Viral infection
- III. The client/caregiver can recognize signs and symptoms.**
- Slow, monotonous slurred speech
  - Visual disturbances
  - Weakness of lower extremities
  - Dizziness
  - Numbness or tingling in extremities
  - Bladder or bowel dysfunction
  - Impaired sense of touch and pain
  - Spasticity of muscles
  - Mood swings
  - Fatigue
  - Difficulty swallowing or chewing
  - Poor coordination, staggering gait
  - Spasticity of extremities
- IV. The client/caregiver can list measures for management of multiple sclerosis.**
- Avoid factors that can cause exacerbation:
    - Infections
    - Excess heat: hot tubs or sauna
    - Excess cold
    - Physical and emotional stress
    - Pregnancy
    - Trauma
  - Exercise regularly with frequent rest periods.
  - Plan regular rest periods to avoid fatigue.
  - Take medications as prescribed.

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- Avoid over-the-counter medications unless recommended by physician.
  - Consider air conditioning for home.
  - Eat a well-balanced, high-fiber diet with fluid intake of at least six to eight glasses per day to promote bowel function.
  - Use safety measures to prevent injury (safety measures teaching guide).
  - Use assistive and self-help devices as needed to promote maximum independence.
  - Keep follow-up appointments with physician and therapists.
  - Continue hobbies and social interests as tolerated.
  - Be aware of signs of depression and how to seek help.
  - Use stress-management techniques.
  - Report any early signs and symptoms of urinary tract or respiratory infections.
  - Practice bladder and bowel retraining.
  - Wear Medic Alert bracelet.
- V. The client/caregiver is aware of possible complications.**
- Renal insufficiency
  - Respiratory infections
  - Suicidal tendencies from depression
  - Falls
  - Constipation
  - Incontinence
  - Urinary tract infections

**RESOURCES**

National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
[www.NationalMSSociety.org](http://www.NationalMSSociety.org)

Counseling, including sexual counseling

**REFERENCES**

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