



Upcoming Support Group Dates Through June 2014

Chicago - North Suburban
Saturday, May 17

Chicago - South Suburban
February 16
(other dates tbd)

Chicago - West Suburban
Sundays
February 16
May 18

Peoria
Sunday June 29

Rockford
Saturdays
February 1
April 12

Springfield, IL
Sundays
March 16
April 27
(other dates tbd)

NW Indiana - Schererville
Saturdays
March 29
May 31

Ames, IA
Saturdays
March 8
June 14

[Click here for time, address](#)

New Year - New Connections

This year at MGF of Illinois, we're thinking about Connections. For us, this means linking one worried parent with another whose child has MG, finding a listening ear for a rural Illinois MG patient, or identifying MG doctors for someone in the Quad Cities. We connect with MG bloggers, Pinterest board creators and Facebook groups ([see below](#)) because we want to be able to share these resources with you.



We value links to other MG groups, too. News worth sharing...the Myasthenia Gravis Association of Kansas City has jump started the St. Louis, Missouri support group. The next meeting is targeted for March. For details, call MGA-KS at 816-256-4100.

Wishing you good health,

Joan Wincentzen

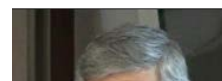
MGF of Illinois Executive Director

New on YouTube



Video clips of two October 2013 presentations, "[Stress Management and MG](#)" by Deb Smith, M.Ed., and "[Meditation as Medication](#)" by Tim Fior, MD, are now available on YouTube.

When you visit MGF of Illinois' new [YouTube channel MGFIllinois](#), you'll find clips from our past patient seminars, covering MG symptoms, medications, research and more. We've reloaded clips from 2008 forward, some of which had over 45,000 viewings.



and parking details.

Donate

[Click Here](#) to to donate to MGF of Illinois.

You can still support our [2014 Calendar Club](#) Fundraiser. Four winners each month!

Meet Our Supporters



Find us on Facebook!



Connect with MGF of Illinois on Facebook to receive the latest updates, share stories and network.

Forward to a Friend

[Share this information with a friend!](#)

[Via our partner page with Apex Management](#)

Contact Us

Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of Illinois
310 W. Lake Street, Ste. 111
Elmhurst, IL 60126

info@myastheniagravis.org

Phone: 630-835-0153
Toll Free: 800-888-6208

You can purchase a DVD with the complete October presentations (or any of our other presentations) for \$15 by calling 800-888-6208.



Side Effects of MG Treatments

Sometimes the side effects of MG treatments position themselves front and center in your life. Be sure to join us Sunday, May 4, 2014, at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital when Dr. Alexandru Barboi from Rush University Medical Center discusses the challenges of balancing MG improvement with other health complications. The session will be from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and will include lunch. Watch for registration details in the next issue of MGF of Illinois' Conquer newsletter.



Walk - Year 2!

Let's tell the world about myasthenia gravis! Join MGF of Illinois on June 1, 2014 for its second Strides Against MG Walk. We'll raise MG awareness and support those who struggle with this rare autoimmune disease. You can choose a 1-mile or 3-mile walk, or just watch the festivities at Berens Park in Elmhurst, IL. Take a stand (and a stride) with us!

All funds raised by the walk fuel MGF of Illinois' mission to care for patients, educate the public and health professionals, and support research.

Calling all volunteers! Call 1-800-888-6208 if you'd like to help with the Walk Committee, line up a sponsor or two, or help at the event.

Click [HERE](#) to see smiling faces from our 2013 walk.

Ice, Snow...Whoops



MDA's Quest magazine offers some great ideas for getting around when it's slippery outside. Click on this link for the MDA Quest



article ["Walk Like a Penguin: Anti-Slip Tips for People with Muscle Disease."](#)

MG Research News

A number of research studies related to myasthenia gravis are currently underway. The Muscular Dystrophy Association (mda.org) is sponsoring a study led by David Richman, MD, University of California Davis, that examines the **anti-MuSK myasthenia form of MG**. MDA also has awarded a grant to Muthusamy Thirupathi, a postdoctoral research associate in microbiology and immunology in the College of Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His research pursues ways to **restore normal immune system** function in myasthenia gravis. Source: <http://mda.org/quest/mg-can-immune-response-be-tamed>

A pilot study led by Ghazala Hayat, MD, at St. Louis University is among those listed at www.ClinicalTrials.gov. The site states, " A common treatment for patients with this disease includes the administration of intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG), which is a plasma protein that is given to help maintain adequate antibody levels to prevent infections and decrease the symptoms of the disease. This study is being done to test if giving this medication in a subcutaneous form (into the fat of the abdomen, legs and thighs) will be better tolerated by MG patients." Study participants are trained to give themselves the infusion at home.

5 Tips to Keep it Light



Saving energy isn't just good for the environment, it's good for people with MG, too. The tools we use in our everyday lives can help us conserve our energy when we learn to think light.

[Click HERE](#) for blogger Marie Smith's Five Lightweight Tips to make your day easier, starting with lightweight packages. [Click HERE](#) to check out her blog, Joy Benchmarks.

2014 Support Group Dates

Maybe you'd like to talk to others who understand what it's



like to cope with droopy eyelids, weak swallowing and comments like "but you look fine." Our support groups are run by experienced leaders, and address various topics related to living with MG. Come for information and friendship! See the left margin for dates through June 2014.

If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time.
- Zig Ziglar

Chew on This



During January we often think about habits. Diet and exercise resolutions can be tough for MG patients. Perhaps you worry, "How can I watch what I eat when medication ramps up my appetite?" or "What if exercise makes my MG worse?"

Only you and your doctor can determine what's right for you. But here's some food for thought:

- A new study that suggests labeling foods with "stop" and "go" colors might spur healthy eating. [Click HERE](#) for more.
- Can too much sitting can be dangerous to your health? [Click HERE](#) for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) article, *Don't Just Sit There*.
- NIH also offers tips if you want to make a change. [Click HERE](#) for *Breaking Bad Habits - Why it's So Hard to Change*.



Check These Out



Looking for MG Pinterest boards, Facebook groups, or Twitter posts? Consider:

- On Pinterest, several of our favorite boards are by "[MayMay](#)"- "Myasthenia Gravis," "Myasthenia G: Nutrition," and Myasthenia Gravis: Exercise.
- MG online groups abound. Some are public, while others are private. Visit [Facebook.com](#) or [Daily Strength.com](#) and search on "myasthenia gravis." [Click Here](#) to find the MGF of Illinois Facebook group.
- MGF of Illinois is coming soon to Twitter.



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Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of Illinois | 310 W. Lake Street | Suite 111 | Elmhurst | IL | 60126