The National Multiple Sclerosis Society

On 14 October 2003, The National Multiple Sclerosis Society issued a statement concerning rumours circulating on the Internet about aspartame.

Stories Linking Aspartame and Multiple Sclerosis Unfounded

Several websites and documents circulating on the Internet are making unsubstantiated claims about aspartame, an artificial sweetener used in many diet soft drinks and other foods.

These stories claim that Aspartame is the cause of a variety of illnesses, including MS, lupus, Alzheimer disease, Parkinson disease, birth defects, Desert Storm syndrome, brain tumors, and seizures. However, please bear in mind the following:

- The claims are not documented.
- There is no evidence for "epidemics" of multiple sclerosis, lupus, and some of the other diseases as claimed in the articles.
- There is no evidence that authors of the claims have any scientific, medical, or academic credentials; nor is there any evidence that they have done any scientific research to support their claims.
- No published, peer-reviewed scientific research exists that supports the claims being made in the articles.

MS symptoms come and go, often randomly. Thus, it is sometimes too easy to assume that something coincidental in a person's life - a food eaten, a specific event, an unproved therapy - is related to the onset of symptoms or the end of symptoms. In fact, it may be independent of any of these things.

Scientifically controlled studies are of great importance, whether they prove a drug is of true benefit or that a substance is of true harm.

What causes MS: Old theories that have been disproved

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