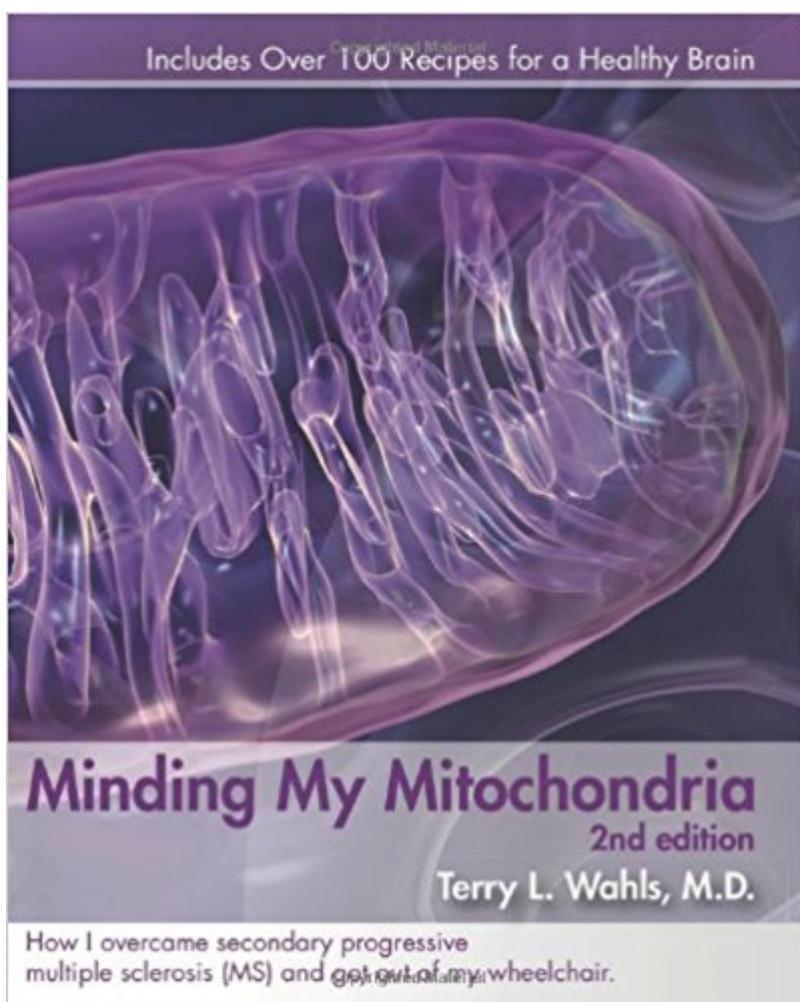


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# Minding My Mitochondria 2nd Edition: How I Overcame Secondary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis (MS) And Got Out Of My Wheelchair.



## Synopsis

Dr. Terry Wahls links micronutrient starvation to the epidemics of chronic disease that are overtaking modern society. She explains the key roles mitochondria play in maintaining a healthy brain and body. Americans are eating so poorly, something we all know to be true, that the majority of Americans are missing key building blocks that are needed for brain cells to be healthy. The result is an epidemic of depression, aggression, multiple sclerosis and early dementia. She then teaches you how to eat for healthy mitochondria, a healthy brain and a healthy body in language that is clear and concise, even for those without a science background. In this book, Dr. Wahls explains basic brain biology in simple terms. She tells us what vitamin, mineral and essential fat building blocks are needed by the mitochondria and other key structures in the brain. Then she explains what foods are good sources for those key nutrients. Over a hundred recipes are provided to help get you started on this new way of eating. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book will be used to fund research into the benefits of these interventions in others.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Her body ravaged by secondary progressive multiple sclerosis, Dr. Terry Wahls spent nearly four years dependent upon a tilt-recline wheelchair. Now, thanks to the intensive, directed nutrition and neuromuscular electrical stimulation protocols she developed, Dr. Wahls now rides her bicycle to work. She has brought together an interdisciplinary team to conduct clinical trials using intensive, directed nutrition and neuromuscular electrical stimulation to combat advanced Parkinson's disease

and secondary and primary progressive multiple sclerosis. She is a clinical professor of medicine at the University of Iowa where she sees teaches residents and medical students in primary care and rounds in traumatic brain injury clinics. She is also committed to helping the public learn about the connection between the foods we eat and the health we have or do not have and lectures nationally and regionally on the use of intensive, directed nutrition to restore health. The Food as Medicine lecture series hosted by the Kirkwood Community College and New Pioneer Food Cooperative has transformed the lives of many people. Terry lives in Iowa City with her spouse, Jackie, and has two children.

I was very unsure about this diet at first, as it seemed to clash so strongly with so many of the wonderful health and diet books I had been reading. Wahls recommendation of a low fat diet that was also very low in saturated fat is the opposite of what highly respected lipid expert Mary Enig PhD recommends, and what is recommended - based on a ton of very convincing evidence - in so many other great books based on maintaining or regaining health through eating the diet our bodies have evolved to do best on, such as Primal Body- Primal Mind, Primal Blueprint, The Perfect Health Diet, Eat Fat-Lose Fat, The GAPS diet and others. So when a friend told me that in fact Dr Wahls has very much changed her stance on fats and saturated fat and now recommends cooking with healthy fats such as coconut oil, butter/ghee (from grassfed cows) and lard, I was really happy to hear it! With that one big issue resolved, this is a diet that tallies hugely with what some of the very best experts in this field are saying and combines the best of what many excellent nutrition books have to say into one dietary plan that I feel is really the best diet out there for anyone battling a serious disease. It is just excellent. I recommend following it if you are ill, very highly. Patients need to read up online about the changes Wahl has made in addition to reading this book, or else just get the information of the diet online while making sure it is up-to-date. (I hope so much that those that have written very pro-low fat diet comments about this book on the reviews page will read this updated information somehow. The right fats in the diet are so essential for healing, and for proper mitochondrial function.) The book recommends eating soy products, rice and potatoes and also recommends a low-fat diet. The current diet plan does not support adding these foods to the diet and is a high-fat diet; high in healthy fats. It is a low-sugar and starch, dairy-free, gluten-free and soy-free diet that minimises or eliminates grains, legumes and potatoes. (Some of us need to completely eliminate these. I know I do.) Wahls writes, 'Raw dairy still has casein (protein) that looks like gluten to our immune system. That means raw milk still stimulates immune system problems. For those with food allergies / sensitivities it is still a major problem. Once sensitized - always

sensitized. I avoid and strongly urge all with an a chronic disease or autoimmune disease to AVOID. Gluten grains - wheat, rye, barley, and the protein in dairy - can lead to an over active immune reaction -- which then can lead to autoimmune problems, asthma, rashes, mood problems and more. For many going gluten free, dairy free is the beginning of better health. Going fully paleo (no grain and no legumes) for many will lead to even more vitality. But for most - it is a transition that may take several weeks or months. It is ok to start small, but do start the journey.. 'Wahls' current diet plan, as best as I can work it out, is as follows:\*

- Eating 9 cups of non-starchy vegetables and berries each day (3 cups each of greens, sulfur containing veggies, and colourful veggies) is essential. Choose organic and/or grow your own if you can.\* It is okay to take in some of your 9 cups in the form of freshly pressed juices.\* Eating good quality grass-fed/free-range/organic meats daily is essential.\* Cook with natural fats such as coconut oil, lard and clarified butter/ghee.\* Eating organ meats such as liver is recommended at least once a week. Liver is very important for B vitamins. Cooked medium rare is best.\* Bone broths are recommended daily. They are full of minerals and help heal the gut.\* Eating seaweed once a week or more is recommended.\* Eating nuts/seeds or nutritional yeast is recommended daily, including coconut milk.\* Eating sprouts is recommended, such as broccoli sprouts.\* Eating fermented foods such as unpasturised sauerkraut is recommended.\* Eggs are recommended, although people with autoimmune diseases should not have egg whites due to a problematic protein in the egg white. (They should be eliminated at first and added back after a few weeks, and only eaten if there is no reaction to them. Same with nightshades)\* Eating small amounts of honey or cocoa is okay, and so is eating natural flavourings in food such as spices and ginger.\* Getting enough Omega 3 fatty acids and not too many Omega 6s is important, so Omega 6 containing oils should be minimised and fish oil capsules taken, and foods such as hemp oil, seafood and flax oil eaten. The best ratio is 3:1.
- Other helpful things:\*
- Vitamin D should be over 50 ng/ml and under 100 ng/ml. (Take a test every 1- 3 months and take 4000 IU vitamin D3 daily, or more if needed. 150 ng/ml is toxic.).\*
- Having daily quiet time is important, to calm down our adrenals. Meditation, massage, nature and family time is also important.\*
- Epson salt baths, melatonin and herbal teas can help sleep.\*
- Minimise toxin exposure and quit smoking.\*
- B complex supplements or sulphur amino acids may be helpful (under a doctor's direction).\*
- Heavy metal testing and treatments such as clay baths and facial clay masks and saunas may be helpful.\*
- A good quality water filter is essential. Wahls also supports ideas such as:\*
- Supplements can in some cases be helpful, but they can never replace a nutrient dense and healthy diet. A proper diet must always come first. Foods contain many beneficial cofactors and other compounds not included in supplements and many that we have not yet even discovered or

named.\* Getting evaluated for potential food allergies, toxic load issues and more personalised nutritional needs by a practitioner of functional medicine is a very good idea. The Institute for Functional Medicine can help you find a provider in your area.\* Drugs are not the answer. Let food, good wholesome food be thy medicine.\* "Between the unexpected, unpleasant events in our lives and our response to those events is a space, and in that space we have a choice in deciding what our response will be. We can either give up or get up each day and do our best."\* "Epigenetics is how your environment talks to your genes. Our cells are capable of reading the state of our environment and activating or deactivating genes. This means that, based on the choices we make, we can turn on genes for health or turn off those health-promoting genes. In other words, it is your health behaviors such as diet and activities, that determine whether the health-promoting or the health-robbing genes are active. For some conditions, such as cystic fibrosis or hemophilia, our genes are an important factor, often the cause of the disease. But for the obesity, heart disease, mental health and autoimmune epidemics that are driving up the cost of health care in the U.S. and around the world, there are no single genes that are the culprit. Instead, for each of these problems, multiple genes are involved, and they interact in a complex way with the environment."\* We need to stop blaming our genes for our illnesses and work on making the best of the 70% that is under our control.\* "Yes, it does cost more to eat vegetables. But you will pay the price either way--for food that restores your health and vitality or for doctor visits, drugs, surgery and loss of work due to health problems."\* "Functional medicine is really looking at health of the cell. And what can we do to help the individual make the environment for their cells, an environment for doing the biochemistry life more ideal. So that comes down to the fruit you eat or do not eat, the quality of the air you breathe, the water you drink, the toxic load that is in your body is a result of the exposure you had over a lifetime because if you couldn't get the toxins out the day you were exposed to them, they get parked in your fat and did you know that your brain is 70% fat? So if you can't get the toxins out you had today with your whatever your exposure was, you're parking it in your fat and your brain which is going to create havoc over time."Hard to argue with any of that! I agree with all of it. Most of the above are quotes from Dr Wahls, from her many websites. Functional or holistic medicine just makes so much sense. It treats the actual cause of diseases, rather than just blindly drugging everything and focusing on endlessly chasing and minimising symptoms. There are 3 basic principles of the type of medicine discussed by Wahls and others in this same field:  
A. Get the good stuff in. Give your body the fuel and tools it needs to work at an optimum level. Good food, nutrients and all the proper vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Make sure you aren't deficient in any of the major nutrients as the different nutrients all work together.  
B. Get the bad stuff out. Make sure your body

can detoxify out all the toxic substances and toxic by-products of bodily processes properly. Stop as many toxins from getting in in the first place, and do things which aid detoxification to get rid of the ones you have.C. Reduce your body's total load. The total load concept is that lessening the body's overall burden/work and stress level in one area, will improve health generally and improve the body's ability to heal because the body's total load (or burden) is lessened. Fixing one problem frees up bodily resources that can be then be used to help other parts of the body function better or to heal. In other words, you need to look at the body as a whole in order to heal, and not just the one part of the body that is generating the most symptoms.-----A special note to M.E. patients on the Wahls protocol:Myalgic Encephalomyelitis is a neurological disease similar in some ways to MS, which also causes demyelination and mitochondrial dysfunction. For those with my particular neurological disease, Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, it is important that activity levels be kept always within very strict limits, or else relapse will occur. (Death is also a risk in M.E. if overexertion is severe. This is not about symptoms or feeling fatigued, but a problem of cardiac insufficiency, reduced circulating blood volume and POTS and so on which is very serious and non-negotiable. Overexertion always causes a worsening of the disease.) But of course activity levels can and should be raised slowly to keep in line with health improvements in M.E. - this is something that happens naturally anyway. For those unfamiliar with the disease, many M.E. patients are housebound and almost entirely bedbound (and far too ill to use wheelchairs for even small periods of time in a day or week) and limited with even basic communication and reading; which is also part of why I am trying hard to summarise the work of Wahls for them as much as possible. 30 minutes of gravity opposing exercise is probably a great recommendation for almost everyone but should be omitted by M.E. patients unless they can do this without becoming more ill or symptomatic. Also, Wahls says: 'It is common to have some level of detoxification (more fatigue, headache) in the first week which resolves and then improves markedly by week two.' I would say that for M.E. patients this statement is not quite right and is an enormous understatement. M.E. patients will often have quite severe healing reactions to supplementation and changes in diet. These can be severe enough to make a patient no longer able to feed themselves or do other tasks of daily living, as well as leave them in agony. They can also last FAR longer than just a week!It is important for anyone ill to make the dietary changes gradually, and for patients with M.E. this caution should be taken very seriously. Jumping in with both feet too fast could leave you very very ill for months afterward. Healing reactions are a good sign that healing is occurring, but need to be controlled so they don't become overwhelming. Switch to the full diet over a few months at least. Slowly but surely is the way to go! Improvements will almost certainly be slow too, so patience is necessary there as well,

especially when the illness has been severe for many years or even several decades or more.M.E. patients will also often do far better eating cooked veggies rather than raw, which can be too difficult and painful for us to digest. (For more M.E. patient-specific tips and cautions see the HFME website.)-----This diet is described as an MS diet, but really this diet is the diet we have all evolved to be best suited to. All of us need such a nutrient-dense and low-toxicity diet, and so I hope people with all sorts of diseases look into the Wahls diet and not just those with neurological diseases. The diet can also help where there is not yet a correct diagnosis. We all need the right amounts of the nutrients that enable healing, no matter what disease we have. For some people following this diet plan will be enough, but for others a higher level of intervention will be required in addition to the diet. The first step toward healing has to be an excellent diet and good gut health, combined with minimising toxin exposures. If more help is needed then, as Wahls explains, it is best to see a Functional/Holistic medicine expert so that it can be determined what extra supplements or other supports you may need. The key is learning about your own 'biochemical individuality.' There are so many tests now which can be done to determine where your detoxification pathways are failing, which nutrients you need more of or have problems utilising or why your gut is still not functioning right. For those that can't find or can't afford to see a Functional/Holistic medicine expert, or cannot see any medical expert due to being housebound etc., an excellent companion to Wahls book are the books by Functional/Holistic medicine experts such as Dr Sherry Rogers. Dr Rogers tells you exactly which tests may help you, how to treat more complex gut problems and how to go about following a more intensive detoxification regime involving a detox cocktail and FIR sauna use. Dr Rogers books are to some extent 'do-it-yourself' health books but ideally Dr Rogers recommends that you get well with the help of a qualified practitioner that will be able to order the appropriate tests for you, and also help you interpret them. Dr Sherry Rogers writes in 'Detoxify or Die', 'I have to laugh when people ask me if I do alternative, herbal, acupuncture or holistic medicine. 'No,' I reply. 'We do state-of-the-art medicine. In other words, we find the biochemical, nutritional and environmental causes and cures rather than blindly drugging everything. Sure, herbs are gentler, safer and more physiologic than drugs and holistic medicine attempts to incorporate many diverse modalities, etc. But there is no substitute for finding the underlying biochemical causes and cures. This is real medicine. This is where medicine should and would have been decades ago, if it had not been abducted by the pharmaceutical industry.' Following a super-high-quality diet is also the foundation of Dr Rogers' treatment plan and so starting with the Wahls diet (which is the best there is) and then moving on (if necessary) to follow Dr Rogers' advice on advanced detoxification techniques just makes so much sense. The best book of hers to start with is Detoxify or Die. It is just

brilliant and very easy to read as well. It has so much good information and support for sauna use and so much more. Her book 'The Safe, Effective Way to Prevent and Heal Chronic Gastrointestinal Disorders' is also excellent. In addition to books by Dr Sherry Rogers I'd also recommend books and articles by Dr Lawrence Wilson (particularly his book on sauna use), Dr Klenner, Dr Abram Hoffer, Andrew Saul, Sally Fallon and Mary Enig and any and all of the vitamin C and orthomolecular experts such as Linus Pauling and Dr Thomas Levy. Other excellent books on diet and nutrition (with huge amounts in common with the Wahls diet) include Primal Body-Primal Mind, The Primal Blueprint, The Perfect Health Diet and Deep Nutrition as well as books on the GAPS diet for the treatment of dysbiosis and a diet-based plan to heal the gut. Gut health is so important and if gut health is poor, then your body can't properly use all the wonderful nutritious food you are eating. Many of us need to heal the gut first of all, and this may at first involve supplements such as Betaine HCL, enzymes and probiotics, as well as dietary changes, as these books explain. All of these books, along with Wahls book, are far more than just standard Paleo diet books. Combining the excellent Wahls diet with the advice on detoxification by Dr Rogers (including the use of an FIR sauna and a daily detox cocktail and 'oil change' nutrients and digestive supports) has seen me finally start to slowly improve my health this last year and a half. I'm slowly improving month by month from a very severe neurological disease - thanks in part to the work of Dr Wahls and Dr Rogers, and others like them - that has left me housebound and almost entirely bedbound for many years. I have been housebound and almost entirely bedbound (and far too ill to even use a wheelchair, or even the phone) for over 10 years and I got ill when I was just 19. Getting slowly worse and worse year after year was terrifying, especially when I was so ill and disabled already. I wish so much I had had this information early on in my disease, rather than coming to it more than 10 years in. Healing is so much easier the earlier you start it. I won't know how much of my damage is irreversible until I improve a lot more (a LOT more I hope!) and find out where I plateau. But for those that have been ill 'only' 5 or 7 years or less, or that are not severely ill, I do think these approaches could be curative or very close to it. At the very least they will undo as much damage as can be undone. My big dream is to get to a 30% function level, where I can live independently.... I'm still so far away from that currently, but I am at least making slow but sure progress now! Being able to cook a little this last year after 8 years or more not being able to even make myself a cup of tea has been just so wonderful. Cooking myself an egg is a joyful experience! It is so wonderful to now each month be getting small UNsymptoms and UNdisabilities! I have learned so much about health that I would never have known if I had not become so ill and been forced to learn it! The Wahls Foundation is a nonprofit organisation that hopes to raise funds to do research on this diet. Buying

this book helps fund their research. The book is mostly recipes and reading more of her ideas online is so helpful. I'd highly recommend watching all her free videos online (watch out for the loud sound on some of them - ouch!), plus her FB page and blog and website. They are all so helpful. Dr Wahls is the real deal and is clearly motivated by a genuine desire to help ill people improve their health. I wish her and her Foundation all the best and thank them for all their wonderful work. This is real cutting edge medicine. Best wishes for future health to anyone still reading this far! Jodi Bassett, The Hummingbirds' Foundation for M.E. (HFME) and Health, Healing & Hummingbirds (HHH)

I have had MS for at least 15 years. Our son, now 22, has recovered from autism using a similar diet plan. So, all was not new to me. This book is excellent and fully researched. In addition it is full of information and advice on recommended supplements. In the span of 4 months I came back to life. It is though my life is starting all over again. I have not fallen since May, and I can now exercise--with intensity--for over thirty minutes. Prior to the diet I fell often and could not exercise more than 5 minutes. My quality of life was getting worse, not improving. My greatest concern is for my vision and I am grateful that my optic neuritis has also greatly improved. This diet is not for sissies--it is tough. A simple common sense plan that requires great commitment to implement. I studied Minding My Mitochondria and the Better Brain Book (Dr. David Perlmutter--neurologist) side by side. I wish they would join together and write a new book. :) Both brilliant doctors who practice compassion, common sense and the belief that your brain can be healed if it is nourished. If you want to be healed--this I have not yet attained--or improve your situation--there is no risk here in working towards that goal. I know I know, MS can't be healed. Well--says who? I have lived long enough (50) to now know that there are massive errors in the current medical system. We only live once and we should try. As I tell everyone--the most difficult day on this diet is better than the best day off of it. So what if I am high maintenance? I am in the game. This is a long journey of healing the body--and I have more steps to go. But this diet restored my life. Thank you Terry Wahls and David Perlmutter!

I too, have been very sick. It was an old Video of Terry I watched that inspired me to work at helping myself get well by what I ate. Terry's illness is not something you just get over, In fact I don't know of any who has done it. I am sure there are now that she has written this book. Her diet and guidelines are very important and I remember watching the original Video thinking "You won't get me to eat raw KALE" I now eat it all the time. I used Terry's book for her research on the body's use of energy for the muscles and pain. I had almost crippling pain until, I finally realized I had a Yeast

Infection that had crossed into the blood stream. I am 70% better now and do not walk in pain and love my Kale and other Wahls diet suggestions.

The book presented the information in a VERY understandable format. After reading the information it became very clear what my body needs and why. It is not a wonder to me why my body developed Primary Progressive MS. When I follow the information in the book I noticed a big difference in the reduction of muscle spasams within the first week. I put off getting the book for almost a year with much regret. It is my opinion the information in the book would be a benefit for anyone, whether you are healthy or walking the journey of an illness. Again, It's an awesome book!

I do not have MS, Parkinsons or any other disease that seems to be helped by Dr. Wahls diet. I do have a mother and two aunts who died with Alzheimer's Disease, and I'm not interested in sharing that experience. I was about 25 lbs overweight, with much fat around my belly. I decided to try the diet to see if it would help someone like me, a chubby woman in her mid seventies to become healthier. I began the diet in November of 2012, and went cold turkey on gluten, increased my veggie intake to very close to the 9 cups a day she advocates, eliminated most refined sugar and found sources of grass fed meats. Today I am 20 lbs lighter, feel great! I find that the cravings for refined carbs have decreased to the point where I have no trouble eating the wonderful food on this diet. Oh yes, one of the reasons I decided to try this is that I have a daughter with Parkinson's. I wanted to see how difficult it is to eat this way. I'm staying on it because I feel better!

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