

Bachelorette Time!



Weekends away with the girls is an experience like no other. Especially when one of your friends is getting married!

The girls are invited, everything has been planned you've FINALLY got everything sorted and paid up—it's time to start counting down the days to the bachelorette party!

But what happens when you are invisibly disabled and are worried about spending the weekend with people you may not know?

If you're like me, you'll be asking yourself things like "will my MS hold out all weekend?" Will they understand when I don't want to drink? Will the other girls make fun of me for needing a "nanna nap" in the afternoon?

Here are some tips I learnt recently when I organized my best friend's bachelorette party!

1. Be humorous.

We chose a nice English town where we could do a lot in the town, so we didn't have to walk too far or travel anywhere when we were there. We chose a very nice, 4-story town house Airbnb that would sleep us all comfortably.

On the drive down while we were discussing the rooms, I mentioned—as humorously as I could—that I call shot gun on the first-floor bedroom because I can't handle stairs. I've found that if you say your concern humorously around people who don't understand MS, it's a lot

easier for people to understand.

2. Don't drive.

As someone with MS, if you're going away anywhere, it's best to not drive. Let the others drive and save your energy for getting through the weekend. The girls on our bachelorette party were really understanding about the fact I didn't want to drive—it made a huge difference to me, and I was able to enjoy the weekend with minimal symptoms.

3. If you're comfortable, be honest about your health.

Talk about your illness with the others and what it might mean for them during the weekend. It helps others to understand what you're going through that they might not be able to see. They have probably never heard of your illness and therefore don't know how it affects you day to day.

I asked our driver if she would mind parking in a disabled parking lot space and explained I had a permit and how it would help me. The ladies were more than happy to help, and one of them even carried my bag for me to the house because she saw me struggling with it. I normally feel awkward when someone does that, but she made me feel at ease—luckily, she was a nurse, so she was a kind and caring sort of gal! It was lovely, and we all got on so well. If you're struggling—tell someone, there is no shame in asking for help when you need it. That is definitely something I have learnt to do this year.

4. Be yourself.

Relax and have fun. Appreciate the opportunity to spend time with people you wouldn't normally get the chance to spend time with. If you don't normally drink, don't feel pressured into it just because it's a 'bachelorette' party and social convention says you should. I much prefer breaking the rules and having a coffee in a bar instead of beer.

5. Choose 'low energy' activities during the weekend.

Our first night was a "board game and takeout" kinda night, which was great and super low energy. The next day was exploring the town and then going to a comedy club at night. We spent our final day in a posh rooftop spa which overlooked the whole of bath, relaxing and reminiscing about the weekend we experienced. It was beautiful.

In England, it is becoming more and more of a 'thing' to spend time in a spa on a bachelorette weekend and I have to say it was the most amazing place I've ever been. It even had an infrared sauna which temporarily took most of my MS symptoms away—heaven!