

My Crutches



To move independently, I use crutches for short distances, to move around in my home and to transfer on and off my mobility scooter. Previously, I used crutches provided to me by the National Health Service.

If I go out, people often ask me if I hurt myself or if I was in an accident when they see my crutches or my scooter.

I have no problem explaining to anyone that, actually, I have multiple sclerosis. though I personally find once you mention MS, either you get a blank expression or the old "I know someone with MS" comment. Sometimes people automatically think MS and diseases like ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis) are the same.



It is frustrating when someone doesn't understand your progressive chronic condition. People may feel sympathetic when they state, "I know how you feel at times" when they are tired. However, MS or any chronic illness should not be confused with something they don't really understand. And please don't recommend that a person living with MS try some fad — currently there is no cure for MS.

Although I look well and take care of my appearance, I get frustrated at times having to explain why I use a mobility scooter and crutches. People automatically assume if you look well, you cannot have an illness. Sometimes it does make me angry, as you should never judge a book by its cover. Better education would help inform the public and raise awareness of chronic illnesses and hidden disabilities.

I am not ashamed to be disabled and always have time to explain my experience. What I don't appreciate is someone who doesn't have multiple sclerosis stating they know how you feel. Unless someone has MS, they cannot understand the pains you constantly feel nor how debilitating this disease can be at times.

In the meantime, I'll struggle on using my crutches. Giving up is not an option.