

# My Journey to Motherhood



**My fairytale journey into motherhood began in fall 2005 when I gave my husband the greatest birthday present ever—a healthy baby boy. My son’s birth was picture perfect, like a scene from a Disney movie. But unlike Disney movies, real life is messy. It’s not only filled with joy and excitement, but disappointment, heartache, and many unexpected twists and turns.**

Nevertheless, becoming a mother was one of the greatest events of my entire life. Like most young moms, I had a newfound appreciation for my mom and her infinite wisdom that guided me through those difficult first months as a parent. Although challenging and exhausting, it was an awesome experience.

My husband and I were so in love with our baby boy and life seemed to be perfect until one humid day in June, my feet started to tingle. The annoying sensation lasted for almost a week before I decided that I shouldn’t ignore it any longer. I called my family doctor, and he sent me for an MRI.

When the results came back indicating multiple sclerosis, I was shocked to say the least but agreed to meet with a local neurologist. That appointment couldn’t have gone any worse. The doctor treated me as a medical diagnosis—not a young mom with a very mild tingling in her feet that had already subsided. He crushed my dreams of having a future child. After that appointment, I felt hopeless and afraid.

I believe that you should be able to trust your physician and feel confident that he has your best interest in the forefront of his treatment plan. Choosing my current doctor was the best decision that I ever made in my MS treatment.

When I met my current doctor for the first time, the appointment was the polar opposite of my previous experience. He made me laugh, gave me hope and told me that having another baby wasn't out of the question. He talked to me about how a different disease-modifying therapy (DMT) might halt the progression of MS without such severe side effects. He suggested making an appointment with a maternal/fetal physician prior to starting the treatment to discuss the risks of having a baby while on DMT.

The following April I had a healthy, beautiful baby girl.

Shortly after I was diagnosed, my mother told me she had faith I'd be ok and lead a normal life. Over a decade later, I can say I have the same complete confidence that I'm going to be fine.

I've learned that fear doesn't have to accompany MS. I am more than a diagnosis and have been able to live the life I've always dreamed of without being controlled by this disease. Instead, MS has taught me many valuable lessons. It has helped me to learn to avoid stress and be thankful for the moments in life that most people take for granted.

Although MS added an unexpected twist to the story of my life, it has made me a stronger and more resilient mother. I can instill in my children that through faith and optimism, they can conquer anything in life that comes their way and see the happily ever after in any situation they face.

**Tell us about your journey to motherhood while living with MS.**

*Feature photo credit: Cassidy Tom*