

Sex, Intimacy & MS



Intimacy with a neurological disease can make things interesting, to say the least. At 25 years old I never thought I would have to worry about my ability to have sex with my wife. It's not a symptom of MS many people want to talk about. But I am not scared.

There have been many ups and downs (hehe) along the way. At one point I decided to try the pharmaceutical route — you've seen the commercials. Do they work? Yup! But the side effects that I experienced were uncomfortable. My face was a bright glowing red and I couldn't breathe through my nose. It was awkward to be ready to go while feeling so terrible, and Meg could see my discomfort. It was all around bad. I tried taking a much smaller dose which helped a lot, but not enough.

It isn't just the good bits that cause all the problems either. Low testosterone, numbness from the waist down and perfectly placed lesions are all contributing factors. Having zero feeling in your left arm... picture a 3 legged dog, a bit wobbly. Humor and intimacy don't have to be enemies. Meg and I laugh a lot, probably too much (is there even such a thing?).

At one point I began to worry my MS was pushing my wife away physically. What I now know was my MS had nothing to do with it; I was creating the problem by not talking about it. Note to self: don't make talking about sex weird. Figuring out each other's expectations and limitations has helped me break down the societal norm of what a desirable partner should be. Being able to have a serious conversation about what is or isn't happening is huge. Life changes so rapidly with progressive MS and I've learned that communication is key. I am thankful everyday that I married someone who is completely honest with me.

For now, I am doing what I can to naturally combat this symptom including being mindful about my diet and exercise. Life is constantly changing; we all have things that make the day to day a bit more difficult, but being able to talk to someone who understands and joke about it is some of the best medicine. Having our sex life so rudely interrupted has helped encourage us to connect on a deeper level and experience true intimacy.

(Photo credit: Meghann Prouse, Indie Photographer)

Editor's Note: For additional information and resources:

- [Sex and Intimacy \(video\)](#)
- [MS vs. Good Sex \(article\)](#)
- [Intimacy \(webpage\)](#)
- [Sexual Problems \(webpage\)](#)