

When You Gotta Go



Where's the restroom?

There are so many symptoms with MS that a bunch of them often get glanced over. The one that has been the most active for me lately is incontinence. The opposite of constipation, incontinence is where your bladder is going to empty NOW; with as little notice as possible. I never thought that at 31, I would be like my grandmother and know where every bathroom in the county is. It can be super frustrating when out of nowhere, you have to go.

Bowel and bladder problems are no stranger to the MS community. In my many years of talking with all sorts of folks diagnosed with MS, I've learned that so many have shared my struggle. There is a special bond created when openly telling someone that you — a grown-ass, bill-paying adult — has peed your pants. In public. And they understand...because they have, too.

Needless to say, hitting the road can be tricky; but we love to adventure so we make it work. My solution? An empty gallon jug in the car at all times. When it's time to go, it's time to go. There is no planning or waiting for the next gas station.

To those who experience this: you are not alone. I have even peed my pants walking down the sidewalk in Seattle — on the way to a doctor's appointment, ironically. As embarrassing as that was (pee smells, folks), it almost feels worse when it happens at home. I can guarantee these won't be my only bathroom fail stories, and when I tell them I wear them like a badge of honor. The plus side is, I can go just about anywhere.

I know there's a long list of medications that help with this sort of thing, but given my history

with not-so-stellar side effects, I would rather just work with what I've got...unless they produce something with side effects that make everything taste like pizza. Incontinence issues are just a small piece of the MS puzzle, but when you add to other symptoms, it can be daunting. This is just one of the so-called "invisible symptoms." Maybe it just happens to be invisible because it's embarrassing as hell.

Editor's Note: This blog was originally published on March 21, 2016 and updated on November 9, 2018.

To Learn more about bladder issues and lifestyle modifications, medications, physical therapy and nerve stimulation procedures that can help you manage them by clicking [here](#) or watch the video below.