

# @Momentum



## **What about men?**

I was disappointed that men with MS were not addressed in "[Oh, baby!](#)" (Fall 2016). My son, age 21, has MS and it has been a worry of mine that I have not addressed with him yet. Should he stop taking his medication while trying for a baby? How long does it take to get out of his system? I've met a few women who have had relapses during/after pregnancy because they were off their medication, and I worry for my son if he has to do the same. It should be something he and his future wife know before marriage.

**Deana Fowler, New Mexico**

**Editor's note:** The answer depends on the specific medication your son is taking. You can read more at [Making Treatment and Lifestyle Decisions](#). We urge you to have your son and his wife discuss these concerns with his physician, who will be able to help guide them as they prepare to start a family.

## **Success with drop foot**

I've had relapsing-remitting MS since 1967. I was able to work as a nurse until 1990. When I developed drop foot, I wore an ankle-foot orthosis for 15 years. I heard of the functional electrical stimulation (described in "[Defeating foot drop,](#)" Fall 2016) and tried it in the office. I walked better than I had in years. The expense gave me pause, but I decided to see it as an investment. It worked well for me. After 18 months I found I was either forgetting to put it on or turn it on, so I left it off. I haven't worn it for seven years and still have good movement of my foot with no sign of a drop foot. I know this doesn't happen for everyone. I'm just thankful it happened for me.

**Beverly Wagner, Wisconsin**

### **Conquering the fear of MS**

After reading "[Namaste](#)" (Fall 2016), I was compelled to share my story. In December 2000, I experienced tingling and numbness in my right hand. It declined within a few days, but in January 2001, I awoke to optic neuritis. To say that I was afraid would be an understatement. I eventually was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Luckily, I was active prior to the diagnosis, but that did not lessen the scariness of the disease. Once I gathered my thoughts and emotions, I decided to continue to do the things that brought me happiness. I became a personal trainer and developed self-appreciation. At 41, I've learned to accept my limits and embrace my obstacles. I may have MS, but through a healthy lifestyle and positive mental altitude, it will never have me.

**April Barber, North Carolina**

### **Invisible no more**

Thank you so much for the article, "[Removing the cloak of invisibility](#)" (Fall 2016). I have been asked by family and friends, and even other people with MS, if I'm sure I was diagnosed correctly. I quit talking about it after that.

In July, my MS acted up again. I was unable to be as active as usual and turned down invites to go out. I could tell people were wondering why the change, so I finally decided to let everyone know on my Facebook page that I have MS. It was freeing for me, and I received many comments from people who also have family members or friends going through the same thing. It was great to be able to share that we are not alone.

**Connie Brown, Oregon**

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## **Digital bonus: More letters from Momentum readers**

### **Let's hear it! Share your thoughts and comments about this issue's stories.**

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- Or send mail to **Momentum** Editor, National MS Society, 900 S. Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, Colorado, 80209. Letters to the editor must include your name and a way for our staff to contact you. Letters should be no more than 100 words and may be edited.

### **Advice for dads**

While the article "[Oh, baby!](#)" (Fall 2016) was informative for women planning on conceiving, the article mentioned nothing about how a new father with MS would cope or conceive. My husband was diagnosed at age 29 when our daughter (a honeymoon baby) was 6 months old. We always wanted more children and were blessed with twin boys in July. My husband has balance issues and weakness in his left leg. We decided together that neither of us was comfortable with him carrying the babies while standing. That's a big decision and puts a lot of extra tasks on me. We've found ways he can help. We have a little red wagon my husband puts the boys in to bring them from room to room. He also helps out in many other ways but fatigue is an obvious issue. I wish some of these examples could have been added to the article, even if just in a side column.

**Erin Zaborac, Washington**

### **Going it alone**

"[Oh, Baby!](#)" had one important omission. When you are advising young, newly diagnosed women who probably at this point have little to no disease progression and are blindly in love, they should also consider the possibility that, eventually, they may be raising children alone. I know that the medical community hesitates to acknowledge that marriages sometimes end because of MS but even so, there is still a 50 percent chance that the marriage will end. Now fast forward 10 or 15 years and three kids later, when your disease starts to progress: Will you be prepared to be a disabled single parent? It is a tough road and I don't regret my own decision to have children, but it would have been less stressful if I hadn't been so blindsided. Just take a moment and think everything through. How many children should I have? Should I stay near family support? Hopefully this will be a pointless assignment but think of it as an emotional prenup and be prepared!

**Valerie Kaleugher (Shar), Pennsylvania**