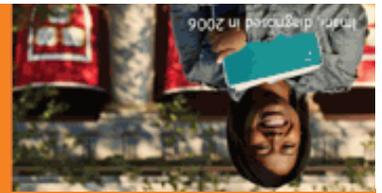


MS = fighting for my future



Central & Southeast Ohio
651G Lakeview Plaza Blvd.
Worthington, OH 43085
800.344.4867

Northeast Ohio
6155 Rockside Rd., Suite 202
Independence, OH 44131
800.344.4867

Established in 1953, the Chapter is an important part of a nationwide network that advances the Society's mission to achieve a world free of multiple sclerosis. We provide quality programs and services to over 10,000 Ohioans living with MS and their families in a 38-county area. Areas served include the Akron, Cleveland, Columbus and Youngstown metropolitan areas as well as all Central and Eastern Ohio counties. Our two offices are located in Independence and Worthington.

National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Ohio Buckeye Chapter



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society
Ohio Buckeye
Chapter



Rachel Walsh

Diagnosed with MS in 2007
Living with MS for 5 years

This is my story...

What is your connection to multiple sclerosis?

I have multiple sclerosis.

How has MS impacted your life?

I was working for the Ohio legislature when I was diagnosed with MS. I'm lucky that most of my symptoms have been fairly mild, but I have had to deal with numbness, headaches, and fatigue on a regular basis.

Are you receiving or have received assistance from any services or programs?

I have not received assistance.

Have you experienced issues with any services or programs? If so, which ones?

I have not experienced any issues.

What else should we know about your unique story?

At age 32 I was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS on June 8, 2007, I don't think I'll ever forget the date. My initial symptoms were severe headaches, numbness, and pressure on the left side of my head. It took about a year and a half to reach a diagnosis, after a couple of MRIs and a spinal tap, with nothing coming back as definitive until I developed a case of optic neuritis in my left eye.

After learning the news, my primary concern was the question of whether I would be able to have children. I had been married for two years at that point, and my husband and I had been looking forward to starting a family, but we certainly weren't getting any younger and didn't want to put that decision off if we didn't have to. We decided to delay any therapies and to hope for the best. After one more bout with optic neuritis, we were fortunate to get pregnant and were blessed with the birth of our daughter Margaret in October 2008. I continued to delay treatment while I breastfed Maggie and finally started a drug therapy in November of 2009.

I was concerned that delaying treatment was risky or irresponsible, but it seems to have been a risk worth taking. I think one of the most challenging aspects of the disease so far has been learning to cope with fatigue and headaches while chasing around a two year-old, but I have been very fortunate that my mobility has been unaffected to this point and that I have a very supportive husband and family. I couldn't do any of this without them.

Thank you for listening to my story!

Rachel Walsh - Worthington, Ohio

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