



The Transverse Myelitis
Association

DECEMBER 13, 2014

WALK FOR SARAH

FIGHTING TRANSVERSE MYELITIS

[HTTP://WWW.CROWDRISE.COM/WALKINHONOROFSARAHROBBINS](http://www.crowdrise.com/walkinhonorofsarahrobbins)

KIWANIS ISLAND PARK | 951 KIWANIS ISLAND PARK ROAD | MERRITT ISLAND, FL 32952

THE STORY

IT WAS NOVEMBER 2011 - OUR 10-YEAR OLD DAUGHTER, SARAH, WALKED INTO OUR BEDROOM IN THE MORNING AFTER SHE AWOKE AND WITHIN 30 MINUTES COLLAPSED IN FRONT OF OUR EYES. OUR ALREADY MENTALLY CHALLENGED DAUGHTER, WAS NOW PARALYZED AND LIFE HAD FOREVER CHANGED. WE WERE TOLD WE WERE LUCKY THAT THE ACUTE ONSET WAS NOT IN THE CERVICAL PART OF HER SPINE OR SHE MAY HAVE NEEDED PERMANENT ASSISTANCE TO BREATHE. WE WERE NOT FEELING LUCKY. THE WORLD FOR OUR FAMILY CHANGED THAT DAY AND NOW WE WERE FACED WITH THE EVERYDAY CHALLENGES OF RAISING OUR PARALYZED DAUGHTER. WE TRIED TO COMPREHEND THE DOCTOR'S EXPLANATION THAT CURRENTLY THERE IS NO MEDICINE OR TREATMENT PLAN AVAILABLE TO HEAL THIS CHILD OR ANYONE ELSE SUFFERING FROM THIS DISORDER. WE WERE TOLD SHE COULD POSSIBLY WALK WITH CONSTANT AND CONSISTENT PHYSICAL THERAPY, OR SHE MIGHT NOT.

NOW, OUR MISSION HAS BEGUN. WE ARE ASKING THAT YOU JOIN US ON THIS MISSION, A MISSION TO RAISE ENOUGH FUNDS TO KEEP THE TMA FINANCIALLY SECURE TO CONTINUE TO PAY FOR THE ONGOING RESEARCH, TO PROVIDE FAMILIES WITH INFORMATION AND SUPPORT AND TO CONTINUE TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR THESE RARE DISORDERS. WE CANNOT FIGHT ALONE AND NEED YOUR HELP! IT IS A CAUSE WORTHY OF YOUR DONATION AND NOT ONLY OUR FAMILY, BUT ALSO EVERY FAMILY THAT SUFFERS WITH TM, ADEM, NMO WILL BE GRATEFUL AND HUMBLED BY YOUR DONATION. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT WWW.MYELITIS.ORG.

THE CAUSE

ABOUT 1,400 NEW CASES OF TRANSVERSE MYELITIS ARE DIAGNOSED EACH YEAR IN THE UNITED STATES, AND APPROXIMATELY 33,000 AMERICANS HAVE SOME TYPE OF DISABILITY RESULTING FROM THE DISORDER. THESE DISEASES AFFECT INDIVIDUALS OF ALL AGES; APPROXIMATELY 25-30% OF THOSE AFFECTED ARE CHILDREN (DEPENDING ON THE DISEASE). THESE DISEASES STRIKE AT ANYTIME WITHOUT ANY WARNING. TM SEES NO PREJUDICE AGAINST RACE, COLOR OR CREED. A PERSON EXPERIENCES A SUDDEN ACUTE INFLAMMATORY ATTACK IN THE SPINE, BRAIN OR OPTIC NERVE, WITH SYMPTOMS SUCH AS WEAKNESS, BLURRY VISION, LOSS OF SENSATION, BLADDER DYSFUNCTION. IT CAN CAUSE PARALYSIS DEPENDING ON THE EXTENT OF THE INJURY, CAN LEAVE SOMEONE QUADRIPLAGIC AND CAN EVEN AFFECT AN INDIVIDUAL'S ABILITY TO BREATHE ON HIS OR HER OWN.

VERY LITTLE IS UNDERSTOOD ABOUT THE DISEASE MECHANISMS FOR THESE DISORDERS. IT IS BELIEVED THAT A PERSON WHO DEVELOPS ONE OF THESE RARE NEURO-IMMUNOLOGIC DISORDERS LIKELY HAS A GENETIC PREDISPOSITION TO AUTO-IMMUNITY, AND THAT THERE ARE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS THAT INTERACT WITH THESE GENETICS TO TRIGGER THE DISEASE. NO ONE YET UNDERSTANDS WHY SOME PEOPLE HAVE A GOOD RECOVERY FROM AN ATTACK, WHILE OTHERS HAVE NO RECOVERY AT ALL. THE TREATMENTS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE HELP STOP FURTHER DAMAGE IF ADMINISTERED QUICKLY BUT DO NOT REVERSE THE INJURY CAUSED BY THIS ILLNESS.

