

# **WEAR MG ON YOUR SLEEVE for June Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month**

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Amy Brill, a Myasthenia gravis patient in Levittown, New York, wears MG awareness on her sleeve – literally. Years ago, she got a tattoo on her arm spelling out “Hope” in teal letters, with the “O” shaped like a snowflake and a teal MG ribbon inside the letter. “That may not be such a good influence, but it works for me, LOL,” Brill said.

While the MGFA does not encourage “tats” to promote myasthenia gravis awareness (although that’s one way to promote awareness year-round), we thank Amy for her permanent dedication. But we are also here to let you know the many ways that you can spread awareness of MG, especially in June during **Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month**, a nationwide movement created by the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America, Inc. (MGFA) to raise awareness to the general public of the often misunderstood and under-diagnosed disease.

You can simply wear an MG Walk shirt around town to encourage people to ask, “What is the MG Walk?” Or you can attend a neighborhood fair, man an educational booth on MG, and scare people (speaking from personal experience(!)) by having on display an MG Walk poster, proceeding to talk about MG, and then, as I experienced, hearing the woman, as she walks away, say “Wow, I hope I don’t get “MG-Walk” one day!”

Or on a more serious note, you can do what Daniel Schwartz, an MG patient in Alpharetta, Georgia, suggests. Daniel will often hang out with his friends and people doing physical activities that he can’t do anymore, such as play kickball. “I watched some friends play kickball because a good friend was the captain. He told teammates, ‘I was just going to watch because I could not run.’ Some people asked, and I explained it to them. . .

***When describing it to people, keep it short and simple.*** If you make it too long, people are going to react how most people would when hearing a lecture on rocket science. And it’s human nature to tune someone out when you get confused. They aren’t ignoring you, they’re just trying to figure out what you were saying. So keep it very simple. For example, I say my muscles and nerves don’t communicate,” Schwartz said.

Or go out in the community and ask restaurants and companies to run donation collections or fundraising nights to support MG awareness; the worst thing they can do is tell you ‘No,’ Schwartz said. “But remember, MG has given you extreme mental fortitude. If a company says no, or it doesn’t work out, dust yourself off and try again.” You can find help in developing a Do It Yourself (DIY) fundraising project through the MGFA’s Classy website and by calling MGFA and requesting a DIY Fundraising kit 1-800-541-5454.

The month of awareness also serves to let people know the work being done by the MGFA to lend support to those with the condition, and how fundraising by the organization is continuing to improve research to both control the disease and to help one day find a cure. The MGFA is a very important resource for you to use not only throughout the month of June, but year round, so visit the web site and MGFA social media pages to stay up-to-date on the latest efforts of the organization and also download the latest educational materials and brochures centered around MG.