



**MYASTHENIA GRAVIS**  
FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, INC.

*Striving for a world without MG...*

December 2011

Dear Friend,

*What if your father— a busy and vibrant man whom you love and admire—suddenly took ill and could no longer work or take part in family activities? Imagine how frightening it would be to go from doctor to doctor, each unable to properly diagnose his condition.*

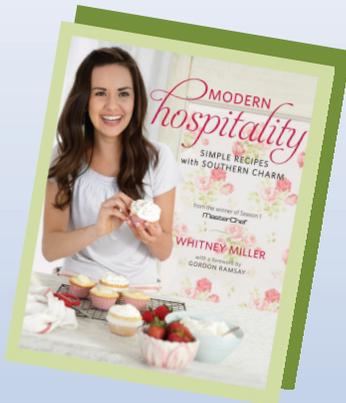
***This is a common scenario for families in which someone has myasthenia gravis (MG).***

MG is a chronic autoimmune disease that triggers antibodies to mistakenly attack and destroy neuromuscular connections. MG causes weakness in muscles that control basic movements like walking, swallowing, blinking, breathing—even smiling. **But MG is not that well known by the public or health professionals.** People suffer with a range of debilitating symptoms, often consulting numerous physicians before the right diagnosis is made. Many are unable to enjoy their daily lives, work, or attend school.

**MG can affect everyone in different ways.** John “Red” Knowles, the owner of a Bosch Power Tools & Accessories distributorship in Texas, experienced extreme fatigue and issues with eating, breathing, and swallowing. “Dad’s problems started during the holidays in 2009,” recalls his son Zach, a 21-year-old Legends Car Series driver. “After consulting a dentist, a neurologist, and a family doctor, Dad was finally diagnosed in April 2010.”



John Miller of Mississippi had symptoms that began in October 2010. His family was alarmed by his drooping eyelids, double vision, fatigue, and a loss of equilibrium. Later he had problems with speaking and swallowing. “We went to an eye doctor and an ear, nose, and throat specialist. A neurologist finally diagnosed my Dad in January 2011,” explains John’s daughter Whitney Miller, a 22-year-old chef and cookbook author who was the first winner on Fox’s hit series *Masterchef* in 2010. “It was a difficult and frightening time.”



Once they had a proper diagnosis, both families turned to the **Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America (MGFA) — the only national volunteer health agency dedicated to finding a cure for MG while providing educational material and local support networks.** MGFA provided both families with practical information, local support groups, and access to online support and resources at [myasthenia.org](http://myasthenia.org). “MGFA makes you realize you are not alone,” reports Zach, expressing his family’s relief. “It’s important to build that network of communication and support,” asserts Whitney.

**While both John Knowles and John Miller are undergoing treatment, MG has deeply impacted their lives and their families.** “Dad’s doing better since his surgery and on his medications,” says Zach. “But Mom and our whole family now pitch in at the business.” “My Dad had surgery in September and is improving,” reports Whitney. “But it’s a process.” Every day, an estimated 70,000 Americans live with the life altering symptoms of MG.

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*Striving for a world without MG...*

And every day, new cases are diagnosed. MG strikes people of all races, genders, and ages. While there are treatments, there is no cure for MG. MGFA is committed to providing information and support to MG patients through research, education, community programs, and advocacy, improving treatment options, and finding a cure.

**Our goal: a world without myasthenia gravis.**

Both Whitney Miller and Zach Knowles are busy supporting their Fathers and MGFA. Zach plans to raise funds for MGFA with Laps for Zach and have people make pledges at the races or online at his website. He also wants to meet with local MGFA support groups as he travels on the Legends racing circuit. Whitney does community outreach as she travels across the country. Her upcoming book signing in December will raise funds for MG. Whitney and Zach have seen their Dads' and families' lives turned upside down by MG. That's why they are committed to supporting the MGFA.

You can join Whitney and Zach in the fight against MG. Your contribution will enable the MGFA to continue its mission to support research, develop diagnostic techniques and treatments, and provide professional education and family outreach programs that are so desperately needed.

Please give today. Thank you so much.

Sincerely yours,

Tor Holtan  
Chief Executive  
Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America, Inc.

***PS: MGFA is the only national volunteer health agency dedicated to the fight against MG. Your gift will be a great help to support people in need and to find a cure. Please mail your donation in the enclosed envelope today or give online at [www.myasthenia.org](http://www.myasthenia.org). Again, thanks so much!***

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