



Majelane Bautista, Student & Sportswoman

It was January of 2011, I had just finished the first semester of my master's program and decided to celebrate with a weekend of snowboarding in Mammoth, CA. Little did I know that my carefree life would take an unexpected turn when the next weekend I wasn't able to carry a load of laundry up the stairs without falling to my knees. I panicked and wondered what had happened to cause this sudden weakness in my body. Was it some weird reaction to the altitude change? Did I not sleep enough? Did I unknowingly hit my head on the slopes causing some kind of concussion?

Originally, the Physician's Assistant thought that I had rheumatoid arthritis or lupus and referred me to a specialist. Luckily, that specialist was familiar enough with Myasthenia Gravis to run the appropriate blood tests to confirm it. MG didn't care that I was 22, adventurous, and had a bright future ahead of me. It attacked my body just the same as it has to so many others. I find myself fortunate that I was diagnosed with MG rather quickly and I didn't experience the torture of the unknown.

Since being diagnosed, I've tried various doses of Mestinon, along with Cellcept, Prednisone, IVIG and even had a laparoscopic thymectomy in June of 2016. I find my condition manageable with the cocktail of medication that my doctors have spent the past six years trying to perfect. While I'm feeling better and able to carry out a pretty normal life, I know that these medicines are just band-aids and more research needs to be done so we can find a cure.

While I may no longer be participating in all of the outdoors activities that I once enjoyed, I'm determined to push forward for myself and my family. I'm determined to travel and see the world. I'm determined to finish the final year of my doctoral program. I'm determined to marry my high school sweetheart in the fall. Most of all, I'm determined to live a full and wonderful life and MG isn't going to stop me.

I have an amazing support system and I wouldn't be able to do it without them. As determined as I am, I'd be lying if I said that I never stressed out or worried about my condition. In those times of confusion, my support system is there to pick me up (sometimes literally) and remind me that everything is going to be OK.

There are a few adjustments that I've had to make since being diagnosed with MG. I put my pride aside and am better about asking for help when I need it or slowing down so that I don't overwork myself. With the upcoming summer heat in Southern California, I like to get my day started early before the temperature rises. I try to stay healthy by going on morning walks and I feel my best when I avoid eating processed foods (as much as I can!). While I may have MG, MG doesn't have me.

Majelane