

Lucretia's Story: Making Plans Instead of Focusing on Her Symptoms



In 2014, Lucretia was getting ready to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with family and friends in downtown Dunedin. She got in her car and all of a sudden, her arm felt very heavy, and she could not move it. She started to get sensation back and moved her arm out of the way, and proceeded to drive to the event. However, within a few hours she felt like she was going to pass out. Not sure if she was having a heart attack she was taken to Morton Plant Hospital where they ran several tests on her. With no real diagnosis and since she was feeling better she was eventually released.

A few weeks later, she received a call at 9:30 pm from Dr. Abraham, treating physician at Morton Plant, who instructed her to make an appointment as soon as she could with Neurologist, Dr. Robertson at Tampa General Hospital. Your test results were POSITIVE for NMO – which is a disease that can lead to paralysis, possible loss of bladder and bowel control and even blindness.

"This call changed my life," explained Lucretia. "In a few days I had an appointment with Dr. Robertson who explained what NMOSD is, and options for treating the disease which is affecting my nervous system."

Neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder (NMOSD) is an unpredictable lifelong autoimmune disease caused by inflammation in the central nervous system (CNS). The CNS is made up of the optic nerve (between the eyes and brain), brain stem, and spinal cord, all of which can be inflamed from NMOSD.

She was experiencing nausea and had lost over 20 pounds in the months that followed. By July of 2014, Dr. Robertson prescribed Rituxan to help manage her symptoms of NMOSD. Rituxan can help people with NMOSD as it targets the B cell and is given every six months. Rituxan helped Lucretia, but she felt like it took a toll on her body. After the infusion it took about a week for her to get her energy back and feel normal again. She was planning her life around her infusion treatments, and had about four months before she felt tired and sleepy/drained all the time with completing daily activities.

In 2021, Lucretia learned about Uplizna from Dr. Robertson. It was a part of a clinical trial and required testing of her blood before and after infusions. Uplizna is specifically designed to target CD19-expressing B cells, a central driver of NMOSD activity unlike other treatments. Lucretia was excited to give it a try, especially if it could help others with the disease to function/have a more normal life. With the change in treatment to Uplizna, Lucretia was introduced to Sage Infusion.

"Sage Infusion provides such a great relaxing treatment space, and the staff is so helpful. From checking in with you leading up to your appointment to the day of your appointment feeling like you're the only one with undivided attention sitting in a comfy chair with a fabulous view."

She continued to state that Sage was a welcome change from the sterile, crowded space at the hospital.

Lucretia has been receiving Uplizna infusions at Sage since 2021 and explains that her Uplizna infusions give her more time to live her life. She still plans her life around her infusion treatments (every six months) but only needs two days to recover and has energy for up to five months.

	Treatment:	Uplizna, every 6 months <i>(Uplizna is part of the Amgen rare disease infused brand portfolio.)</i>
	Results:	More free time between treatments Less downtime after infusion Reduced risk of relapse of symptoms