



# my Lupus journey

**Jennifer Podhaski**

My name is Jennifer Podhaski. I was born in 1975 and was diagnosed with lupus in 2011. While growing up I played softball; I soaked it UP! That was my go-to throughout my childhood and in high school. After high school I immediately jumped into the property management business and loved it! I worked in Atlanta, Las Vegas, Connecticut and Florida for over 20 years with other jobs in between. In all my transitions, I became tired more and more, and it was a different kind of tired. When I was originally working in Atlanta before all my work-related moves, I saw a doctor in 2005 who said that I might have lupus. Back then I didn't even know what that meant, and it totally went in one ear and out the other. Honestly, I was so caught up in my job/jobs that I didn't even want to know what it was and ignored it. Fast forward to 2010. Every time I would get on a treadmill, my knees would give out and I couldn't walk. I knew something wasn't right because I couldn't do a simple workout without a lot of pain. My entire body always hurt but was getting worse so I went to the doctor and explained my symptoms. Prior to this I also suffered daily migraines but pushed my way through it - even if I had to go home and lay down, throw up and sit in a dark room with a washcloth on my head. I had the privilege to work when I wanted because I was an assistant manager and lived on site so could come and go as I pleased. This meant sometimes working at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning but I was fortunate to have an understanding property manager. After the doctor did numerous blood tests, I was told in 2011 that I tested positive for SLE and this, along with fibromyalgia, explained all of my symptoms.

I'm not going to say I'm happy to have lupus; it has actually taken a lot of my life away! But I will keep fighting and not give up... I hate living my life like this. In 2019 I had bronchitis eight times and my doctor says my immune system is still very low. I have to wear a mask EVERYWHERE I go, which I hate but I don't have a choice. At times I walk with a cane because I'm too weak. I can't do the things I want to do anymore. I used to be so outgoing and happy. Now I feel consumed and just want to sleep and rest my body. I hurt every single day of my life, as I'm sure most lupus warriors do. I pray one day there is a cure. This is just part of my journey.

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The Cruel Mystery

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