



Health Awareness

Shortening The Journey To Epilepsy Independence

(NAPSA)—At 39 years old, Marla Holt was a single parent of three teenagers, navigating her way through a divorce and pursuing an undergraduate degree, when she suddenly experienced multiple seizures that landed her in the emergency room. She was diagnosed with epilepsy.

Over the next several years, Marla tried numerous medicines to control the epilepsy, but the seizures continued. She was told by her doctor that she should no longer drive and became frustrated with a growing loss of independence. She began to question how she could be a good mother if she couldn't control her own body.

Like Marla, one in three people living with epilepsy experiences uncontrolled seizures or medication side effects. This often leads to the loss of driving privileges, challenges in the workplace—an inability to get and hold a job—or even attend school. For some, it could mean not being able to live on their own and for far too many, it leads to feeling isolated, hopeless and at a loss about where to look for support.

Marla found her support through a network of friends and family who helped her maintain a positive outlook on life. Even though Marla's journey to seizure freedom is not yet at its end, she is grateful for her support system and improved seizure control.

Now, Marla shares her per-



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sonal journey as part of the Epilepsy Advocate™ program. Epilepsy Advocate is a community of people whose lives are directly impacted by epilepsy—those with epilepsy, their caregivers, friends and family. These individuals share their experiences, challenges and triumphs to help empower others to seek the kind of medical care that will lead to epilepsy independence—seizure freedom with minimal side effects.

“When I was first diagnosed with epilepsy, I felt hopeless and lost. I wish there had been a resource like Epilepsy Advocate to help guide my journey. Today, I speak out through the Epilepsy

Advocate program to encourage others to take charge of their own care and strive for epilepsy independence. I am finally living life on my own terms, and I want others to know that they too, can live well with epilepsy,” says Marla.

Epilepsy Advocate offers inspiration and guidance to those who want to take control of their journey to epilepsy independence. Resources include EpilepsyAdvocate.com, Epilepsy Advocate Facebook page, an online radio show featuring interviews with people who offer insights and ideas on how to address the many challenges of living with epilepsy, and *Epilepsy Advocate*, a free magazine with helpful articles about different aspects of living with epilepsy.

In addition, Marla is one of more than 60 Epilepsy Advocates who share their stories at free Epilepsy Advocate events in communities around the country. These events, which started in 2006, have provided almost 7,000 people in more than 106 cities and towns with information about how to take control of their journey to epilepsy independence. Future events can be found at EpilepsyAdvocate.com.

UCB, The Epilepsy Company™, a biopharmaceutical company based in Atlanta, proudly sponsors the Epilepsy Advocate program as a part of its commitment to the epilepsy community.