

My name is Jeremie Smith and this is my Lyme Disease Story.



This is a non-confidential application

2005- Flue/ Fever like Symptoms when in Iowa USA working at a summer camp. I had a large rash on my backside but after a week the symptoms went away but the rash continued for some time until it too went away. I found myself having to go to the bathroom with severe stomach pain after every meal from that time on. I didn't see any doctors there due to the cost it would take to see anyone seeing as i was from another country.

2006- Stomach pains decreased over the next year but i found myself getting tired/stressed very easily.

2007- My stomach became severely worse when i got sick about mid-year. I went from being able to stomach most food to not being on the ground with pain after every meal. I tried to change my diet saw multiple dietitians and breath tests and digestive specialists. all ruling out any major allergies to food or digestive diseases. I had to quit my promising job and seek further medical help.

2008- I eventually cut out most foods that were causing me the most problems but I was still in pain every day and had lost most of my energy. I went from an athlete to someone who could barely leave the house. Eventually I got the energy to look for work again and got a job in retail. This was one of the most stressful and pain full periods of my life due to my health not improving and my reliance on others to support me more than they should.

2011- Over the next 4 years I stumbled through life just getting by. I was eating the best I could still with no improvement. It was just through sheer faith and effort that I was able to do anything at all. Eventually the pain got the best of me and my partner and I split due to my feeling that I wasn't going to be able to support them and or myself in the future. I didn't feel good enough to do anything so I quit my job and tried to take time to get better.

2012 – I made this year my year to recover and see what else I could do to gain my health back. This year was the hardest I had pushed to get back into life. Here is a list of achievement in this year.

.Traveled overseas to Vietnam and Thailand for a Month with friends.

.Rode on a charity bike rode from Sydney to Melbourne. (Almost killed me)

.Volunteered with a youth outreach team

.Joined and played local AFL for the first time

.Competed in a triathlon

.Studied an online course/subject

.5mths gym 3days a week

2013 – Looked for work for the most part of this year with no improvement in my stomach or general health. Still not able to gain weight or sustain muscle gain I found myself disheartened and out of answers on any idea of how to move forward.

2014 – I had been surviving on the government until this point. . I sent out over 400 job applications over the last 2 years. Mid-year I worked with a friend's coffee roasting company which was quite laborious with early mornings. I started to notice my energy levels decreasing rapidly with my heart palpitations included. After strenuous activity I would sometimes go partially blind with floaters in my eyes. I had no idea what was going on and was short of breath most times. I had pain in the middle of my back no matter how much treatment I went for to relieve it. Eventually I got a full time job that would start in 2015 at a school as an integration aid.

2015 - A few weeks before I would head into work the left side of my face started to go numb occasionally with my fingers and feet also feeling similar affects.

Then I had a pain in my lower right leg below my calf that wouldn't go away. It felt like a strained muscle but never healed. I was driving home after started work a week earlier and my legs and arms went numb. I had to pull over in extreme panic and pain. Eventually I regained feeling but that feeling was a pins and needles feeling with severe pain.

I went to hospital had MRI, x-rays, heart monitors and so on. I started to develop more symptoms which I will list for you now. Sore aching legs arms neck and back – Numb left side of face – Sore chest and shoulders – dry lips & mouth – Teeth moved location – Severe pelvic pain and movement – Numbness after sitting – sore knees and hamstrings – hard to breathe – rapid hair loss – rash was aggravated – sores and cuts wouldn't heal for a long time – dry itchy skin – weight loss – muscle loss. Those are just some of the symptom I was and still go through.

Present – I was diagnosed with Lyme disease in March of this year. Since then I have been diagnose with POTS Syndrome and Crohns Disease. All from undiagnosed and untreated Lyme Disease/ Tick Borne Infections for 10 years.

Having Lyme has impacted my life greatly, holding me back from my fitness aspirations and general health. My relationships and mental health have been severely impacted. My reliance on the government and family to provide for me instead of my pursuing a career has taken its toll. While friends move forward and grow I fall behind and watch their futures progress. I have ultimately given up on life due to my inability to get better. Financially I cannot afford to go overseas to get the treatment I need to improve.