



SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH



Rare Immune Disorder Doesn't Stop "Globe Trotter"

(NAPSA)—As a toddler, Matt Roth suffered from multiple upper respiratory infections, including pneumonia and chronic sinusitis. His severe and persistent illnesses coupled with his parents' conviction to find the cause led them to an immunologist who finally had a diagnosis. At age 2½, Roth was diagnosed as having a rare, genetic disease called Primary Immune Deficiency Disease (PI). PI is a genetic disorder where all, or part, of a person's immune system is damaged or missing. Unlike a person with a healthy immune system, everyday occurrences like shaking someone's hand or dusting can cause infections.

Decades ago, most people like Roth who had a suppressed immune system did not know what their recurrent infections meant and thus could not be treated. People with a PI died or suffered permanent disabilities because of the lack of treatment. Fortunately, through the years, awareness has increased and treatment is now available. Roth and other PI patients receive a plasma-based therapy called intravenous immunoglobulin (IGIV). IGIV helps Roth's immune system combat illnesses that a healthy immune system could easily defeat.

Roth began his IGIV therapy at age 2½. The youngest of 10 brothers and sisters, he was more susceptible to illness than the other children. After he was diagnosed, Roth's only request to his brothers and sisters during childhood was: "Treat me like everyone else." This is exactly what his siblings did. Roth's family helped him realize he could lead a "normal" life with proper treatment for his PI.

Roth played on his high school hockey team and most of his teammates and peers did not know he had a PI. After graduating from Northwestern University in Chicago, Roth yearned to travel



For Matt Roth and other immune-deficient patients, treatment helps make a normal life possible.

overseas. Some people, especially those with a compromised immune system, might find this daunting or even impossible, but not Roth.

There are many factors to consider for a traveler and particularly for someone with a PI. Receiving proper care and infusions overseas, insurance costs, and most importantly, possible exposure to infection, could all be of concern.

Roth embraced the challenge and packed his bags for Ireland. He took a bartender job in a traditional Irish pub. During the next year, he received his IGIV treatment via airmail, and self-infused his therapy. According to Roth, "IGIV treatment has made the world a smaller place for people with PI."

Roth loved living and working abroad. His monthly infusion of Gamimune[®] N, an IGIV treatment manufactured by Bayer Biological Products, allowed him to enjoy all Ireland had to offer. He even participated in Irish folklore, and kissed the famed Blarney Stone, something that may have made him sick without IGIV therapy.

Now living in Denver, Roth goes to National Jewish Hospital to see his trusted information

source and infusion nurse, Barb Lindenbaum. She monitors Roth's infusions to ensure he receives the best treatment possible.

"I've been an infusion nurse for nearly two decades," says Lindenbaum. "Since 1981, when the first ready-to-use IGIV therapy became available to people with primary immune deficiencies, I've seen my patients benefit from IGIV treatment and their advancements. But my patients aren't the only ones who benefit from a well-tolerated product. Therapies made with my patient in mind, help me as well. Most recently, Bayer introduced its next generation therapy called Gamunex[®], and Matt and I are really excited for this new product. Matt participated in the clinical trial for Gamunex[®] and responded very well to the treatment."

Roth, a real estate attorney, and his wife Mary, are grateful life has been somewhat "normal." When asked about how he could help other PI patients, he said, "Education and early diagnosis will help others like me because it still takes about nine years for a PI patient to be diagnosed. This needs to change."

To diagnose primary immune deficiencies, a doctor conducts a few routine procedures, including a family history check, a physical examination and a blood and immunoglobulin level test. People suspecting they may have a PI should consult with a physician. With early diagnosis and proper treatment, people with Primary Immune Deficiency Diseases can control and prevent infections and even navigate the globe, like Roth.

For more information, consult your physician, visit Bayer at www.gamunex.com, the Immune Deficiency Foundation at www.primaryimmune.org, or The Jeffrey Modell Foundation at www.info4PI.org.

¹Gamimune = Gamimune[®] N 10%, Immune Globulin Intravenous (Human), 10%, (IGIV-SD)

²Gamunex[®] = Immune Globulin Intravenous (Human), 10% Caprylate/Chromatography Purified

³Gamunex[®] = Immune Globulin Intravenous (Human), 10% Caprylate/Chromatography Purified