



## Overcoming Gastroparesis: Teacher Learns Ways To Manage Chronic Gastrointestinal Condition

(NAPSA)—Lynn's Story:

At the start of her senior year at a Connecticut college, Lynn was on the road to achieving her dreams. She planned to go to graduate school and eventually work with autistic children. And she had just started dating a wonderful young man.

As the fall semester progressed, however, Lynn developed a chronic gastrointestinal condition that baffled her doctors. "I was vomiting 10 to 15 times a day, every day," says Lynn. "I became dehydrated, weak and horribly fatigued. I went to the emergency room to get intravenous fluids so frequently that the staff knew me on a first-name basis." Eventually, Lynn was diagnosed with gastroparesis.

Lynn did graduate from college, but she had to put her life dreams on hold. She couldn't work full-time, and even her part-time work with individual children required her to plan regular stops for vomiting in public restrooms. Her condition also cast doubts on her personal future. "I couldn't imagine raising children if I had to take time to vomit 15 times a day," she says. "And how could I plan a wedding, knowing I couldn't eat my own wedding cake!"

Medications didn't stop her symptoms. She was considering having her stomach surgically removed as a last resort. Finally, after years of vomiting, Lynn conducted yet another Internet search for gastroparesis treatment options. That's when she learned about Enterra Therapy® (gastric electrical stimulation).

After several evaluations, Lynn had a gastric electrical stimulation system implanted. Six months into treatment, Lynn noticed a big difference in her symptoms.

Lynn has since opened a school for autistic toddlers and young children where she works full-time. And she married the man who had supported her throughout her ordeal.

While the effectiveness of gastric electrical stimulation hasn't been shown, and results differ for each patient, it has helped Lynn.



**The Medtronic Enterra® Therapy System, as pictured above, uses gastric electrical stimulation to treat chronic, drug-refractory nausea and vomiting due to gastroparesis of diabetic or unknown origin.**

Feeling in control of her life again, Lynn is eager to take on the challenges that seemed so daunting before gastric electrical stimulation.

For patients with chronic, drug-refractory (resistant to medication) nausea and vomiting due to gastroparesis of diabetic or idiopathic origin, Enterra Therapy may be a treatment option. The effectiveness of this device for this use has not been demonstrated.

Enterra Therapy is not a cure and may not be right for everyone. For those patients who do experience a benefit, the rate of improvement will vary from person to person. Implanting an Enterra Therapy system has risks associated with the surgical procedure and risks associated with the therapy and device. Once implanted, the system may become infected, the lead/device may move or wear through the skin, the lead may entangle with the bowel, and irritation/inflammation over the implant site may occur. The therapy system could stop suddenly because of mechanical or electrical problems. Complications from this therapy can require surgery or cause a return of symptoms. Talk with your doctor to determine if Enterra Therapy is right for you. For additional safety information and a complete list of adverse events, please visit [www.enterratherapy.com](http://www.enterratherapy.com).

### What Is Gastroparesis?

Gastroparesis is a condition in which food in the stomach is digested and passed into the intestines more slowly than normal. In a healthy digestive system, strong muscular contractions move food from the stomach through the digestive tract. With gastroparesis, the stomach contents pass much more slowly into the digestive tract, even though there is no obstruction preventing the stomach from properly emptying. In turn, this can sometimes cause nausea, vomiting and other related symptoms.

It's not always clear what leads to gastroparesis, but most commonly it is either developed as a complication of diabetes, a complication of stomach or small intestine surgery, or is idiopathic (unknown) in origin.

Only a doctor can make a diagnosis, but the signs and symptoms of gastroparesis include:

- Nausea and vomiting
- A feeling of fullness after eating just a few bites
- Abdominal bloating
- Heartburn or gastroesophageal reflux
- Changes in blood sugar levels
- Lack of appetite
- Weight loss and malnutrition

Diet changes, medications and enteral feeding are standard treatment options for gastroparesis, but, on their own, they may not provide enough relief for some people. For patients who don't respond to traditional treatments, other options may be available, such as gastric electrical stimulation.

Without proper treatment, gastroparesis can cause several complications, including weight loss and malnutrition, bacteria overgrowth and blood sugar fluctuations. For more information on gastroparesis and treatments, please visit [www.g-pact.org](http://www.g-pact.org).

Please see your healthcare provider to ensure a proper diagnosis and to learn about your treatment options.

Further information about the therapy can be found at [www.enterratherapy.com](http://www.enterratherapy.com).