Transcript from Interview with Meghan Bradshaw

Meghan Bradshaw (00:17)

First diagnosed in 2019. It was the day after I had bilateral hip replacement surgery at the age of 26. And so getting to that accurate diagnosis took many years and many doctors. When I start to think back to how early I was showing symptoms, I can think up to 10 years back. And so I had to really seek out information and you have to dig. You have to really, really dig for it because it's just not as readily available as it ought to be. And so this functional medicine doctor who I was working with, I mean, I credit her for truly, she saved my life because granted, I'm in a terrible position because of all of the damage that I've had because of this so far, but I can't help but to wonder just how bad it could have been if I had never been diagnosed properly because I know how bad it can be and I don't want anyone else to have to go through this.

(01:23):

When I started to learn and uncover how complex of an issue it is with tickborne infections and how it's chronically underfunded, under researched, there's just so much work to be done.

Interviewer (01:37):

What advice, what words would you give to somebody who didn't even know that they could donate from surgery for research?

Meghan Bradshaw (01:48):

Yeah. I've talked to a lot of patients who had no idea that that was an option and I totally get it. When you're having surgery, you're worried about your outcomes, your recovery period, what your life is going to look like post-op and preparing to have everything set up. So for a lot of people, the last thing that's crossing their mind is like, oh, how can I donate to research? And so I think the most important thing is just raising awareness so that other patients know that they can do it and it requires very little effort on their end. You just have to fill out some paperwork to sign off, to give away your parts and a brief medical history. And then your doctor's office will coordinate with NDRI and make it really seamless and really easy. I think that when I tell other patients about it, they get really excited because they had no idea that this was even an option.

(02:47):

And I know for me, I feel like some personal gratification knowing that, okay, well, it stinks that I'm having surgery, but it could be that my parts do something to really change the outcomes for research and help other patients. And so yeah, I think personally you can feel good doing it too.