

# Why I Muck

By Erin Norris, MD, FRCPC

I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2010, when I was 20 weeks pregnant with my third child. When Leah was born, I would watch her and wonder if I would be able to do all that I did with her older siblings. And when I was ready to stop wondering, I decided to do something to make it happen.

In 2014, I participated in my first Muck MS Canada event in Hamilton. I had never done an obstacle course event before, but it seemed different and challenging. My husband, Larry, was incredibly supportive and joined my team right away. I convinced our friends, Anthony and Naomi, to join us too, although I'm sure they both thought I was slightly crazy.

As donations from friends and family rolled in, I realized that I was really going to have to do this. The night before the Muck, I lay awake thinking about the obstacles that would be insurmountable and that my left leg might give out on me. I had trained and I was ready, but I worried about the unpredictability of my body when I challenged it.

But the next day, the energy and camaraderie at the event were outstanding. I saw strangers help each other through, over and under obstacles, and teammates that

cheered each other on. Adrenaline propelled me through the course, and my heart was ready to burst with pride as I crossed the finish line to applause and leaned forward to receive my medal. I was proud of what I had accomplished, and grateful that so many people were there, for me and for others, in the fight to end MS. I'm only a little embarrassed to admit I cried.

I have now participated in three Muck MS events. This year, my family and my team pledged to fundraise \$100,000 for the MS Society of Canada by "mucking" it up. I am proud to be raising both MS awareness, and funds to support MS research. Three years later, I know that the obstacles awaiting me on the course—like the challenges of MS—won't defeat me.

*For more information on Dr. Norris's fundraising efforts visit her website at <http://mssoc.convio.net/goto/ErinNorris2016>.*

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Dr. Norris's family and team pledged to raise \$100,000 for the MS Society of Canada.



Dr. Norris and her husband "mucking" it up at the MUCK MS event in Hamilton.

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