

Living with Endometriosis - My Story – by Mlyn McCune

I have endometriosis, a disease where lining of the uterus grows outside of it, causing severe pain, fatigue, and other complications. It's not just bad cramps or something all women go through. It's a chronic illness that affects daily life, relationships, fertility, and even organ function.

I've had endometriosis since I was 13 years old, and still deal with it today at 26. In those years, I've had over 14 surgeries to remove scar tissue, endometriosis growth, and recurring cysts. Due to the extreme pain, at 20 years old I had a hysterectomy, something I never thought I'd have to face so young. But even after all of that, I'm still here, still fighting, because this disease doesn't just disappear.

For years, I was told my pain was normal that I was just overreacting, being dramatic, or that it was 'part of being a woman' But deep down, I knew something wasn't right. The pain wasn't just during my period; it was constant, affecting my ability to work, ride my horse, or even do basic tasks. Some days, I could barely stand up straight. Other days, I pushed through, pretending I was fine because I was tired of people not understanding.

Sadly, there is so much misinformation about endometriosis. Too many are spread misleading information, claiming birth control will stop the pain, pregnancy is a cure, (it's not), or that a hysterectomy will fix everything (it won't). Endometriosis is not just a reproductive disease it can grow on organs like the bladder, bowels, and the diaphragm, causing life-altering complications. As well as embedding in the muscle surrounding the uterus.

More education on this disease needs to be provided. Women deserve accurate information, real treatment options, and not have the disease dismissed.

There is no cure. Treatments like surgery, medication, and lifestyle changes can help manage symptoms, but they don't work for everyone. That's why awareness matters. Too many women suffer in silence, dismissed by people who don't understand what we go through.

If I had known more about endometriosis earlier, maybe I wouldn't have had to fight so hard for answers.

But despite everything, I don't let it stop me. It's hard some days are worse than other, but I refuse to let this disease take away everything I love. I still work at a job that I love, and I still do what truly makes me happy: barrel racing and rodeo. My passion for horses keeps me going, giving me a purpose beyond the pain. Endometriosis is part of my life, but it doesn't define me.

If you experience severe pain, irregular symptoms, or feel like no one is listening keep pushing. Advocate for yourself, find doctors who truly hear you, and don't let anyone make you feel like your pain isn't real. And even if you don't have endometriosis, spreading awareness and understanding this disease can help more than you know. Whether it's supporting a friend, recognizing symptoms in a loved one or patient, or simply knowing the truth, awareness makes a difference. Together, we can break a silence and fight for better care and recognition for those who suffer like myself from this.