



Brian Sly
Arthritis Walk Honoree
Cedar Rapids, IA



Brian was 15 years old when he was diagnosed with a form of Juvenile Arthritis. For several months prior to his diagnosis he was plagued with hip pain. At his age, his family thought he was just experiencing “growing pains.” Physical therapy and adjustments provided little relief, and his pain was evident to everyone around him; watching him walk, it was very clear he was suffering.

Brian was eventually diagnosed with Ankylosing Spondylitis, a form of arthritis that affects the spine. Symptoms include pain and stiffness from the neck down to the lower back. The spine’s bones (vertebrae) may grow or fuse together, resulting in a rigid spine. Brian’s arthritis is in his hips for now, and he has lost almost half the cartilage between the bones in his hips. His prognosis revealed a hip replacement within thirty years; that was almost ten years ago.

Arthritis hit Brian very hard; not only physically, but mentally as well. He had always been very athletic, as were his best friends. When he discovered he could no longer take part in the sports he so loved, he took it very hard. This represented a lost bond and common interest with his friends. Sports were the driving force that enticed Brian to keep his grades up. No longer needing to remain “eligible” for sports, Brian’s grades really suffered. He remained close to his friends, and did go to college. Although the task was daunting, with encouragement from his family he continued to soldier on.

Today, Brian is 24 years old, happily married, and he and his wife are expecting their first child in July. Brian doesn’t talk about his arthritis much. He has chosen to move on and live life to the fullest every day.

It is because of this strength and commitment that the Arthritis Foundation is proud to have Brian as its Arthritis Walk Honoree.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults and 300,000 children, and is the nation’s leading cause of disability. To conquer this painful, debilitating disease, we support education, research, advocacy and other vital programs and services.