

A Day...or Two #InTheirShoes

Journal entries of a Takeda employee who participated in the two-day #InTheirShoes program to learn more about what it's like to live with IBD.

DAY 1

11:05 a.m.



Just found out that caffeinated drinks are prohibited—I'm already preparing myself for the withdrawal symptoms.

12:32 p.m.



Urgent need to visit the bathroom. I feel everyone is staring at me as I rush to the toilet.

1:30 p.m.



Another pit stop. Only a false alarm, but had to walk past at least 4 co-workers on the way.

3:30 p.m.



Am already thinking about how I make it home in one piece—my drive is at least 40 minutes and it's mostly highway.

8:30 p.m.



My husband makes me a light dinner, but I realize I shouldn't be eating it—it has tomatoes and multigrain bread.

11:30 p.m.



I pack my swim bag for next morning's training but also pack a change of clothes in case I have an "accident" during the day.

DAY 2

6:00 a.m.

I go for my morning swim, but I'm very tired...My breakfast is basic porridge and yogurt—I'm worried about the side effects since it's going to be a long workday.



8:00 a.m.

Got to the office—and just in time, I have to use the bathroom.



10:30 a.m.

Am with a colleague when I get awful stomach cramps. I can't leave the meeting so we just continue to work. My colleague looks really concerned.



11:15 a.m.

Another toilet dash (this on top of "normal" toilet breaks). On the way back, a colleague asks if I've lost weight because my clothes look looser.



12:30 p.m.

Drinking tea helps with the cramping - but not for very long. I am sneezing constantly and not only have to be concerned about a flare up, but also whether my bladder will "hold" when sneezing!



7:35 p.m.

My worst nightmare has happened. I'm on the highway and desperately need to use the bathroom. I pull over & look for some trees or bushes...nothing. I open the passenger door and squat behind that. I feel humiliated.



FINAL THOUGHTS

I pull into my drive way and I am so relieved I actually start to laugh...hysterically. I get to go back to my normal life, but this experience has given me new perspective and new meaning to my work. As I reflect upon the past two days, I am exhausted and extremely grateful for my health. I have a lot of pride in my association with Takeda, as the health of our patients is always a top priority.