

RA Appeal 2010



Hi my name is Jo, some of my closest friends don't know what I am about to tell you.

For the most part, I live my life positively and healthily - but I have a disease that affects hundreds of thousands of Australians – three out of four of whom are women.

It's an incurable disease that sadly carries a stigma.

It's a disease where sufferers feel isolated and don't believe they can ever get better - but it's not depression.

Women put off pregnancy, can't nurse their babies and take care of their families - but it is not breast cancer.

Quite simply it is arthritis - more specifically, Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). The PA Research Foundation needs your help to forever change the face of this debilitating disease and like the cervical cancer vaccine – bring the world a cure.

Never before have researchers been closer to providing a solution to a disease affecting the quality of lives of hundreds of thousands of Australians.

Researchers have discovered a mechanism enabling them to reset the immune system in RA – they have a preventative in their sights.

This mechanism re-educates the immune system and this discovery has led to the development of a rheumatoid arthritis vaccine known as Rheumavax – now in Phase I of clinical trials.

I am one of the many people on the trial who all share the same dream.

please turn over to finish reading Jo's story

Please support the PA Research Foundation 2010 RA Appeal

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. You can also make a donation online at: pafoundation.org.au

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199 Ipswich Road, Woolloongabba QLD 4102

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Please do not send me further information from the PA Research Foundation

We don't want to sail solo around the world and at this stage there are no Everests in our lives. Our pain limits our visions to those daily tasks often dismissed – leaping out of bed, opening a jar or running in the park with our children.

My son Jack, is only eight years old but already knows more about RA than the average Australian.

As much as I don't want this disease to define me – Jack understands its limitations. He accepts that my wrist is damaged beyond repair so that playing a game of tennis or ten pin bowling with him are my Everests.

I was only 28 when I suffered a bout of food poisoning that triggered the disease, resulting in swollen toes and problems walking which ultimately led to a diagnosis that forever changed my life. I've had two arthroscopies on my left elbow and hand, a collapsed wrist and major joint degeneration in both feet that now requires surgery – but I can't afford to be off my feet, away from home and work for three to four months at a time.

Yet like all Everest climbers – I have my Sherpa – my guide on this indomitable challenge is Professor Ranjeny Thomas and through funding by the PA Research Foundation, I can truly say my pain is now constrained and managed.

That is the very reason I am part of this trial. I'd like to highlight that RA does not only affect the elderly, but people of all ages including young children. My pain is real and creates obstacles that don't allow me to give what I would like to those that I love, or to be the mother, daughter, sister, friend and partner that I'd hoped to be.

The arthritis gene is hereditary. I will do everything I can to prevent my son from contracting RA and suffering any pain. He is the very reason I keep going – he is the reason I am sharing my story with you.

'I want him to have happy and uncomplicated memories of his childhood. I'd like him to be able to look back on his early years and remember the fun times we shared such as kicking the football, flying the kite and riding our bikes'.

Please don't let him remember me saying, "Sorry buddy, I can't do that because of my wrists" or have him grow up so fast he feels responsible to help me do simple tasks that I find difficult or painful.

Let's develop this vaccine and stamp out RA.

The following brochure outlines the research. All you have to do is make a donation to this year's appeal by filling out a coupon or going online to www.pafoundation.org.au

There is nothing glamorous about RA – it is painful, disfiguring, debilitating and ruining the lives of millions of Australians. But we CAN do something about it.

Be part of a world wide breakthrough. Tell your friends, "I helped stamp out arthritis!" – NOW IS THE TIME.

Yours sincerely

Jo Barron
PS. Thank you for your support.



Please make a donation to our 2010 appeal by filling out the coupon, going online to pafoundation.org.au or calling 07 3176 2359. We need your help.



Taking the pain away from so many Australians will make the world a happier place. Who doesn't want to be a PART of that?