

“I hope that by *hearing my story*, you will *find your why, too*”

## Meet: Gerolyn

When I was diagnosed with polymyositis, I was in the middle of living out an adventure. I wasn't ready to give up on my travels. It was important to me to define my *why*—my reason to fight. My family is my *why*, and Acthar® Gel (repository corticotropin injection) is my *how*—how I'm fighting my polymyositis.

It all started toward the end of 2016. I began noticing the strangest things in my body. I started having pain and discomfort in my shoulders which made simple tasks like opening a water bottle or putting on my coat difficult. I'd gone through countless tests, including biopsies and x-rays. After all this, my doctors diagnosed me with polymyositis.

A few doctor recommendations later, I found my ideal healthcare team. Together, they worked out a plan of action to start me on an injectable treatment called Acthar Gel for the treatment of polymyositis. At first, I experienced some difficulty sleeping as a side effect, but this was resolved by moving my twice-weekly injections to the morning. A Nurse Navigator was assigned to me, and they taught me how to self-inject under the skin. They are always available if I have any questions and make me feel a part of my health journey. Now, I'm determined to inspire other patients to define their *why* while also treating my polymyositis.

Everyone's experiences are different. It's important to talk to your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about your treatment. Individual results may vary.

### Want to learn more?



Talk to your doctor about Acthar.



Visit [acthar.com](http://acthar.com) or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



### What is Acthar Gel?

Acthar Gel is a prescription medicine for flares or on a regular basis (maintenance) in people with dermatomyositis or polymyositis (DM-PM).

Acthar is injected beneath the skin or into the muscle.

### SELECT IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

**DO NOT** take Acthar until you have talked to your doctor if you have any of the following conditions:

- Have been given or are about to receive a live or live attenuated vaccine
- A skin condition called scleroderma
- Bone density loss or osteoporosis

Please see additional Important Safety Information for Acthar on the following page. Please see accompanying full Prescribing Information or visit [www.acthar.com](http://www.acthar.com).

**Acthar**<sup>®</sup>GEL  
(repository corticotropin injection) 80 U/mL

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

**DO NOT** take Acthar until you have talked to your doctor if you have any of the following conditions:

- Have been given or are about to receive a live or live attenuated vaccine
- A skin condition called scleroderma
- Bone density loss or osteoporosis
- Any infections, including fungal, bacterial, or viral
- Eye infections, such as ocular herpes simplex
- Had recent surgery
- Stomach ulcers or a history of stomach ulcers
- Heart failure
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure
- Addison's disease or Cushing's syndrome
- Allergies to pig-derived proteins
- Suspected infections at birth (in infants under 2 years of age)

Tell your doctor about any other health problems that you have. Give your doctor a complete list of medicines you are taking, including all prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

### What is the most important information I should know about Acthar?

- Never inject Acthar directly into a vein
- Always inject Acthar beneath the skin or into the muscle
- Follow your doctor's instructions for injecting Acthar
- Never stop treatment suddenly unless your doctor tells you to do so
- Try not to miss any scheduled doctor's appointments. It is important for the doctor to monitor you while taking Acthar
- You may be more likely to get new infections. Also, old infections may become active. Tell your doctor if you see any signs of an infection. Contact your doctor at the first sign of an infection or fever. Signs of infection are fever, cough, vomiting, or diarrhea. Other signs may be flu or any open cuts or sores
- When taking Acthar long-term, your adrenal gland may produce too much of a hormone called cortisol. This can result in symptoms of Cushing's syndrome. This may cause increased upper body fat, a rounded "moon" face, bruising easily, or muscle weakness
- Sometimes when you stop taking Acthar long-term, your body may not produce enough natural cortisol. This is called "adrenal insufficiency." Your doctor may prescribe a steroid medicine to protect you until the adrenal gland recovers
- You might develop high blood pressure, retain too much salt and water, or have low blood potassium levels. As a result of this, your doctor may recommend some changes to your diet, such as eating less salt or taking certain supplements
- Vaccines may not work well when you are on Acthar. Talk to your doctor about which vaccines are safe to use when you are taking Acthar
- Acthar may hide symptoms of other diseases. This can make it more difficult for your doctor to make a diagnosis if something else is going on
- Stomach or intestinal problems. Acthar may increase the risk of bleeding and stomach ulcers. Tell your doctor

if you have stomach pains, bloody vomit, bloody or black stools, excessive tiredness, increased thirst, difficulty breathing, or increased heart rate

- Taking Acthar can make you feel irritable or depressed. You may also have mood swings or trouble sleeping. These effects are reversible once Acthar therapy is stopped
- If you have other conditions, such as diabetes or muscle weakness, you may find they get worse
- You might develop certain eye conditions, such as cataracts, glaucoma, or optic nerve damage
- Your body may develop allergies to Acthar; these allergies may be severe. Signs of allergic reaction include:
  - Skin rash and itching
  - Swelling of the face, tongue, lips, or throat
  - Trouble breathing
- The effects of Acthar may be intensified if you have an underactive thyroid or cirrhosis of the liver
- Long-term Acthar use can affect growth and physical development in children. This can be reversed when Acthar is no longer needed
- Acthar may cause osteoporosis (weak bones)
- Acthar might harm an unborn baby. Therefore, tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant

### What are the most common side effects of Acthar?

Commonly reported side effects of Acthar include:

- Injection site reaction
- Fatigue, physical weakness, and lack of energy
- Fluid retention
- Insomnia (difficulty sleeping)
- Headache
- High blood sugar

The most common side effects for the treatment of infantile spasms (IS) are:

- Increased risk of infections
- Convulsions
- High blood pressure
- Irritability
- Fever

The above side effects may also be seen in adults and children over 2 years of age. Some children with IS progress to other forms of seizures; IS sometimes masks these seizures, which may become visible after treatment for IS has been completed.

### These are not all of the possible side effects of Acthar.

Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you, or that does not go away. Call your doctor or pharmacist for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA. Call 1-800-FDA-1088 or visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch). You may also report side effects by calling 1-800-844-2830.

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