

8/14/06

TO THE ATTN OF: BEVERLY LOFTEN, MHA

This is my story which I would like to submit for the 30 day public comment period for national coverage of VNS therapy.

As I have indicated to Pam Lipp, Cyberonics, and Tania Stockbridge, Schwartz Public Relations, I want to get as involved as possible in the campaign to increase awareness to doctors, insurance companies and potential recipients. I would be willing to do presentations for this cause as well.

My only request is that I receive a copy of anything that is printed which involves my participation in any way or a recording of anything done in person. Thank you for the opportunity to get involved.

I am comfortable going public w/ my story, name and photos included. I will be interviewed for local TV sometime this week, as arranged by Schwartz Public Relations.

Dr. Dmitry Arbuck, head of the Meridian Health Group, Carmel, IN and VNS Therapy have truly saved my life.

The story below could be far more detailed if you are interested. (Loss of jobs, 5 marriages, running away from home and distancing myself from family for nearly 30 years, a 7 ½ yr. violent marriage...) I'm not sure how much information you are looking for. My next goal is to be employed by Cyberonics (in all seriousness). I am currently an inner-city, special education teacher at the high school level in Indianapolis.

**Helen Norris
5645 Castor Way
Noblesville, IN 46062**

**(317) 575-4534 Home
(317-408-7900 Cell
norris.helen@sbcglobal.net**

I believe I was depressed since early childhood. My depression deepened in my twenties and early 30's, when working as a teacher. I felt like a robot, merely going through the motions of trying to perform job responsibilities and then crying uncontrollably when alone in my car/my private refuge. I felt that I could not be the kind of mother I wanted to be to my children as the result of my illness. Often they had to fend for themselves when I was unable to meet their needs or even just get out of bed for them. My son sometimes cooked his own dinners at 10 years old. I had fleeting thoughts of suicide, but my love for my children stopped me.

I saw numerous psychiatrists over many years and took at least 15 different medications. When I met Dr. Arbuck for the first time, within an hour he said he didn't know how I could function considering the high doses and combination of medications I was taking. He hospitalized me two days later for detoxification, and changed all medications.

Afterwards, still drug-resistant, he talked with me about VNS therapy as a long-term treatment option for my chronic depression.

I had the VNS Therapy procedure on February 10, 2006 and can describe my change in mood as dramatic. I believe the VNS therapy took effect as soon as the device was turned on. Perhaps this immediate change was partially due to some placebo effect and a sense of hope. None the less, it was vividly real and I am no longer the depressed person that wanted only to hide in shadows. Co-workers, unaware of the procedure I experienced, commented that I looked different, healthier and walked with more confidence. This summer when visiting my brother, his comment in all sincerity was that I looked ten years older the last time we were together, three years prior. I feel great and am so thankful. VNS has given me my life, which I do not believe I was ever in control of, including my childhood years. The change feels like a fairytale. I am eager to tell others about VNS Therapy. If I can help save even one person from the pain and self-destruction I've suffered, I will only begin to share my thankfulness." Now, I am slowly learning how to develop a social life, which depression had previously prevented. I look forward to developing new and lasting, stable relationships.