



Pedaling with Purpose: Brian's Bike Ride for Sjögren's Disease

When Brian Stallcop embarks on his 309-mile cycling journey from London to Paris this July, he won't just be crossing international borders, he'll be riding for a cause that hits close to home. His wife, Shawna, was diagnosed with Sjögren's disease just a few years ago after a long, frustrating search for answers. Now, Brian is using his passion for cycling to raise awareness and funds for the Sjögren's Foundation.

"What's really awesome about this ride... we finish in Paris the day before the Tour de France, and follow the route down the [Champs-Élysées] and pass the Arc de Triomphe, and we finish at the Eiffel Tower," Brian said. "So that's going to be pretty fun... That's a bucket list thing."

Brian's four-day ride, taking place July 23-27, is part of an organized event where riders choose their cause. Brian debated different causes but chose to ride for Sjögren's after realizing the answer was right in front of him.

"I actually had a couple different ideas, and then I realized that the purpose was sitting across the dining room table from me," he said. "Sjogren's is kind of a struggle. It flies under the radar. It took [Shawna] years to get a diagnosis. It's very hard to find somebody who understands it unless you're in a major city with a teaching hospital. I mean, your average internal medicine doc really doesn't have any idea."

Shawna, a family nurse practitioner, has used resources from the Sjögren's Foundation to educate not only herself but also her own medical providers. "She's even used some of the resources, I think from your website, to give to her medical providers to try



Brian Stallcop plans on cycling 309 miles, in honor of his wife Shawna, to raise awareness and funds for the Sjögren's Foundation.

to bring them up to speed," Brian explained.

Brian is no stranger to endurance rides—he previously cycled 500 miles through Oregon—but preparing for this event has its own challenges, especially through the harsh Oregon winter.

"I have a Peloton, so I did a 90-minute ride on my Peloton yesterday," Brian said. "While it's snowy outside, I'm doing the Peloton at least three days a week. And then I'm trying to cross-country ski one to two days a week. As the weather turns, that will transition to outdoor cycling. I'll probably be trying to get at least a hundred miles a week on my road bike leading up to this."

While his fitness base is solid, Brian admits that the real challenge is something much simpler. "It's really just, honestly, my base fitness is fine, but it's training your butt to be in the saddle that long," he laughed.

continued page 15 ▼

“Pedaling” *continued from page 13* ▼

More than just a fundraiser, Brian’s ride is a way to bring greater awareness to Sjögren’s disease.

“I think with so many diseases or disabilities, they don’t always manifest themselves visually,” he said. “So you can be sitting next to a person with Sjögren’s and have no idea the challenges that they’re facing.”

That’s why Brian is sharing his journey far and wide. He’s focusing his efforts on social media, his Rotary Club, and conversations with friends and family. He’s also armed with a QR code for instant donations at events, and as the ride gets closer, he plans to ramp up his outreach even more.

Be sure to follow us on social media, where we’ll share updates on Brian’s journey, including highlights from his ride!

“This ride is a bucket list item for me, but it’s also a way to support Shawna and others living with Sjögren’s,” Brian said. “I want more people to know about this disease and understand the challenges patients face.”

Thank you Brian for raising critical awareness and support for the Sjögren’s community. We’re cheering you on!



Shawna and Brian Stallcop

Interested in raising money for the Sjögren’s Foundation, please email us at info@sjogrens.org. ■

Scan to support Brian's efforts.

