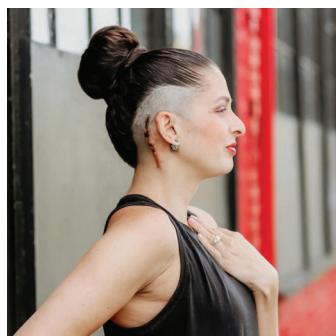


Share Your AN Story

A storytelling toolkit from
the Acoustic Neuroma Association



ACOUSTICNEUROMA
ASSOCIATION

2025 STORYTELLING TOOLKIT

Your AN Story Matters

We are grateful to all of the individuals who share their stories with our community, and believe they are invaluable to those searching for a similar experience.

Know that when you share your unique AN story, you are:

- >> Helping AN patients and families understand they are not alone.
- >> Inspiring those in the AN community to advocate for themselves, their care and their treatment.
- >> Educating others so they better understand what it's like for those living with acoustic neuroma.



It was great to see my story published and I'm happy to encourage fellow AN patients and remind them they're not alone!

—Marya

>> EVERY PERSPECTIVE COUNTS

Everyone affected by acoustic neuroma has a unique story to tell and anyone touched by AN can share their story. This can include patients, spouses, and caregivers. It can also include children of those diagnosed with AN, best friends, siblings. There are many different perspectives and insights. All are connected to an acoustic neuroma experience and all are valuable.

Sharing Your Story

>> BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

We understand that writing a personal story can be overwhelming. It can be scary, cathartic, and emotional. It can also be healing for you and for others. Before you begin writing or videoing your AN story, take some time to reflect on and process what you've been through.

This may involve revisiting memories of your AN journey, looking back through old photos and journals, or speaking to trusted loved ones who have shared this experience with you.

>> SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS YOU BEGIN WRITING...

Once you're ready to begin, consider some of these questions to help you get started.

What is your intention for sharing your story? Let this intention guide you.

What details do you want to include in your story? What photos or visuals? This is your story, and you get to decide which parts of it you want to share.

Which part of your journey do you believe would be most helpful to share with the AN community, or someone looking to connect with your experience?

What impact do you want your story to have on the larger AN community? Do you want it to educate? Inspire action? Connect with others? This can impact how your story unfolds.

3 Ways to Share Your Story

There isn't just one way to share your AN experience. Longer, detailed stories are shared in our newsletter, *NOTES*, and in the Patient Stories section of our website. If you prefer sharing a shorter story, a Milestone or a social media post might be a better choice.

You get to choose a storytelling format that works best for you and your journey.

1

Sharing your story as an article, typically used for the [ANA NOTES newsletter](#)

- **Preferred length:** approximately 400 - 600 words
- **Additional items to include:** 1-3 high-quality photos

2

Sharing a shorter AN story, typically used for social media posting or [Milestones on the ANA website](#)

- **Preferred length:** at least 300 words
- **Additional items to include:** 1 high-quality photo

3

Creating a [video](#) to share your story

- **Preferred length:** Roughly 2 minutes



Topics to Consider

We encourage the submission of stories that cover a wide range of AN experiences across various topics. Here are just a few that you might consider exploring in your story.

- How you raise awareness for AN, or why you volunteer/fundraise with the ANA
- Your journey to diagnosis
- Dealing with difficult emotions surrounding diagnosis and treatment
- Telling your family, friends, and coworkers about your diagnosis
- What you wish you had known about AN during your journey
- How AN impacted your day-to-day life
- Tips for living with acoustic neuroma
- Tips for managing AN before, during, and after treatment
- Being your own AN advocate
- Advice for caregivers
- Finding the right healthcare team
- How to effectively communicate with your healthcare team and caregivers
- How you chose your treatment plan
- The road to recovery
- What your biggest challenges were and how you overcame them
- How you stayed positive during the more challenging parts of your journey
- Helpful treatments, therapies, devices
- How you found support and what that support looked like
- Connecting with the larger AN community

Some Additional Writing Tips

- Gather all of the materials you might need before you begin writing — think about journal entries, photos, artwork, and information about your diagnosis. This can help you stay organized, and keep you from getting overwhelmed while you're trying to put your story together.
- If writing begins to feel daunting or overwhelming, take a break. Take a walk or chat with a friend - you don't have to complete it all at once.
- Don't pressure yourself to tell a perfectly crafted story. Trust your own voice and your own experience, and the story will follow.
- Telling your story in chronological order — from early symptoms, to diagnosis, to treatment and aftercare — can be a helpful way to organize your writing.
- After you've completed your story, put it away for a brief period and then come back and give it another read with fresh eyes. See if there's anything you want to edit or change before submitting.
- Consider getting feedback from someone you trust before submitting. They can make sure it reads well and provide valuable insight, helping you make your story relevant and effective.



Submitting Your Story

When you've completed your story, please submit it, along with any photos, videos, art, or other visuals to:

Manager, Volunteer Programs
volunteers@ANAUUSA.org
678.331.5369



All images should be high-resolution original photos (please no photos of a photo or images downloaded from social media).



**Thank you again
for sharing your
story with us and
the AN community!**



ACOUSTICNEUROMA
ASSOCIATION

Together for Better

Acoustic Neuroma Association
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Alpharetta, GA 30009
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ANAUUSA.org

The ANA retains the right to use your story and/or photograph(s) and video(s) and any other submissions at our discretion across the ANA's digital and print platforms for communications and/or promotional purposes. Your story may be edited for length, grammar or style. Your photographs may be cropped for size and/or edited for clarity or style. No hyperlinks in the text of the story. No copyrighted images or plagiarized text.

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