



## What I wish you knew...

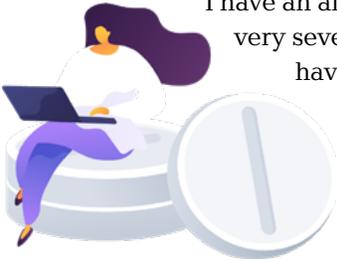
as a family member, friend or colleague of a person with AERD

### I have an incurable illness called Aspirin-Exacerbated Respiratory Disease (AERD)

My immune system is dysfunctional, which causes major inflammation in my respiratory system. Both my sinuses and my lungs are affected. AERD is not rare but it is hard to diagnose. AERD is not fatal, but reactions can be. People with AERD may need repeated surgeries to remove nasal polyps and have to take multiple medications to stay well.

I have a sensitivity to Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. When I take these medications

I have an allergy-like reaction that can be very severe. Some people with this disease have been desensitized to aspirin and take it every day to combat inflammation. Ask me about my status so you can help in case I have a potentially life-threatening reaction.



I may have a diminished sense of smell and taste (or none at all). Imagine missing out on the scent of your newborn baby or the flavor of your favorite food.



I may not be able to drink alcohol as it can also cause a reaction so please respect my choice not to consume alcohol.

I may have cold symptoms without actually having a cold (i.e. sneezing, runny nose) so please know that my disease is not contagious.



Working harder to breathe is tiring so I may need to decline invitations or cancel engagements to rest – your understanding will help me to be well.

Having a chronic illness and being sick often can be emotionally and physically draining, with both personal and professional impacts.

I have expert specialists caring for me – I do not simply have allergies or a cold. Please do not suggest herbal remedies or other treatments as it can be frustrating to explain why I need a complex treatment plan and care regime designed for me.

### You can help by

→ learning more → spreading the word → donating to research → [AERD.info](https://www.aerd.info)