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I have been trying for months to think of what I would say today – what could I possibly tell you that would help you understand what my life was like before and after Lotronex? I am sure that you have read all the medical information, all the statistics, all the pros and cons, but how do I make you see the effect that one small blue pill can have on a person's life? I have been holding onto this empty bottle since the day I ran out of pills – it sits on the shelf in my bathroom as a reminder that there is hope. Hope for a better life, a normal life once again for me and my family.

Let me begin by reassuring all of you that I have no connection to any drug company. I am not being paid to say this, and I have come here at my own time and expense in hopes that you will hear my plea and bring Lotronex back.

I have suffered from the debilitating effects of IBS-D for almost 30 years. I have spent most of my life rushing to a bathroom, sweating, in pain, heart pounding, praying that I would make it in time – and so many times I haven't. My husband is used to my hysterical cries of “we have to find a bathroom now”! I can't even begin the list of things I can't do because of my IBS-D. So many things that healthy people take for granted – going for a walk, riding a bus, taking a taxi, going for a boat ride, riding in the car with others (I am always afraid we'll have to pull over for a mad dash to the bathroom). Standing here now is so far outside of my comfort zone. Just to be here I have to resort to my only solution - numerous Immodium, no food, and constant prayer and affirmation that I will make it through. This might be the only time when running to the bathroom might make my point.

Over the years I have seen a multitude of doctors (who usually said it was in my head and to try stress therapy), tried just about every drug available, tried hypnotherapy, macaroons, low fat, high fiber, anything and everything that might offer some hope. I think I've bought every book printed on the subject. My family doctor recommended Lotronex shortly after it hit the market and it was truly the wonder drug I had hoped it would be. I took Lotronex for about 1½ years with no side effects whatsoever. Early on I did have to alter the dosage slightly after I experienced some constipation (which was something I had never known before), but other than that Lotronex was a dream come true for me.

For the first time in 30 years, I could actually envision enjoying the normal aspects of life without fear. I have a 3 year old son and I could take him to the park or a sports event or even a walk without worrying if there was a bathroom nearby. I could go into town and have a nice dinner with my husband. I thought about all the things that I had given up and most of all I thought about the full life I could now lead with my husband and family.

When I heard that Lotronex was being pulled off the market I felt like I had died. I couldn't imagine going back to the life I had led before. I had been given the hope that I could lead a normal life and that was all taken away by the withdrawal of Lotronex. I live my life now by taking up to 8 – 10 Immodium a day and avoiding any questionable circumstances.

Although IBS-D may not be life-threatening, you can see from my story and those of so many others today that a life without Lotronex is a miserable existence. Quality of Life is the issue here and I beg you to hear my plea to bring Lotronex back to those who so desperately need it.

Thank you for listening.