

# 97 Avonex Stories & Tips



**I'm Donna...one of Stan's MySpace Friends: I want to pass it on to Stan's other 3,330 Friends**

**I moved recently and found a new neuro and he suggested I try the Avonex that I have to mix myself as opposed to the pre-mixed that I've been using**

**He said that often the side effects aren't to the medication itself but to the acids they use as stabilizers.**

**I took my first Avonex injection yesterday that I mixed myself and I'm FINE..I'm up doing laundry...cleaning and cooking.**

**This is a miracle because I'm usually in bed for a day or two after sick from the side effects.**



**352,388**  **myspace** **READERS**



**Tips About AVONEX**  
**from the**  
**MS News Channel MySpace**  
**Archives**

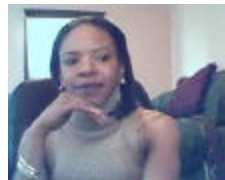


**Advil/Aleve kicks ASSSSSS!!! lol!! Since I started taking it, I get no symptoms! Except...do any of you guys (on Avonex) get a rapid heart beat? Cause I do....had my heart checked (with an echo) & doc looked at me like I was crazy cause nothing was wrong with it (they all look at me when I walk in there like I'm crazy..I hate that!!! lol) Anyway, just wondering! I'm going on almost 2 years since I have had my 1st (and only.,...hopefully last) attack, and I went on Avonex right away and have been on since. Good luck babe! Posted by**

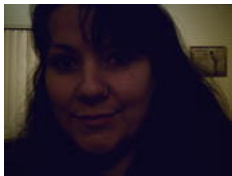
**::Nisey::**



**Avonex is a life saver for me also. After my first 2 injections, the flu like symptoms only last about 4 hours. BE SAFE, BE STRONG (Bubba)**



**I have been on Avonex for about 2 years now. Truthfully I like most do not like it, but it is something that I gotta do. I do suffer sometimes from the terrible flu-like symptoms, headaches and body aches...but not always. I never know from week to week what I will feel like after the injection. It apparently is doing the job for me because there are no new lesions, so for that I am thankful. Everyone is different, so, prayerfully it will work for you and you will be one of the ones who doesn't get the side effects on a regular. Love and Hugs, Del**



**I've been taking Avonex for 5 years now and it's the only MS drug I've taken. The only adverse reaction I've had is the flu-like stuff (achiness, fatigue) and unfortunately the claim they make that it lessens over time hasn't been my experience. Some weeks I feel alright others I wake up feeling like I've been hit by a truck. I do my injection on my Friday so I don't have to work feeling poop. I also take ibuprofen about an hour before. My neuro also told me to take the dose out of the fridge and let it sit for awhile before you inject and that's suppose to help lessen the side effects. He explained why it helps but honestly I forgot. In the 5 years I've been taking it I've never had a flare that required any treatment and I have no new lesions showing on my MRI so it must be good for something. I hope it works for you and the side effects are minimal. Take good care. (((HUGS))) Posted by Michelle**



**I have taken Avonex for five years now. First shot was terrible flu like symptoms. I had fever, chills. Since then it has been fine. It is the only medicine I would want to take. One shot a week is wonderful compared to the others. I take my shot in the evening. I take advil before the shot, I then take a bath and go to bed. The next day I may be a tiny bit lethargic, but nothing more than that. It works too. My last MRI had one lesion. I would be scared to think what would happen if I decided against medicine. Good luck with your shots. They really aren't difficult to do. They are intramuscular, not subcutaneous injections, but don't let that scare you. The pain sensor is the skin so it doesn't hurt anymore than subcutaneous injections. Contact me anytime. ((hugs)) Posted by Denice**



**This is gonna sound weird, but it's the truth. I have had MS for 10 years as of February 25th, and been taking Avonex for all of it. My neuro, and my MS Specialist said that the MS was bad enough, they don't think it would have been different on another med. I had 1 exacerbation every 5 to 6 months for 7 1/2 years. But then, I am currently on the longest run of exacerbation free time in my life, 2 years and almost 2 months. The side effects, the flu like symptoms, the muscle weakness and fatigue, and fatigue in general was pretty bad to begin with, but it gets better with time. I do my shots on Saturday nights, sleep thru some of the side effects, and spend Sundays watching Nascar or football. I have nothing but good things to say about Avonex. Yes, its rough sometimes, but what isn't? Many (((Good Luck Hugz))) are coming to ya. ~~~Bubba**



**Good luck, being on therapy is definitely the right choice! I was on Avonex for almost 2 years. I believe I have a pretty high pain tolerance. But for the 1st 6 weeks on Avonex, "flu like symptoms" was an understatement. Just to warn you, it really made me feel awful!!! But those side effects did lessen to the point that I didn't get them at all. So hopefully you don't feel terrible, but if you do, try to stick it out. As I said, in my experience it did get MUCH better. I found that drinking a lot of water on shot day helped a lot. (Along with ibuprofen and aleve). GOOD LUCK!!! Posted by Beth**



**I am on Avonex and really haven't had much trouble with it. I had the flu like symptoms at first but those went away and I could control that with taking advil before my shot and in the following morning. Drink hot tea before your shot. The symptoms went away after a month. I only have them now if I am really stressed and tired and/or sick. But they are controllable. Good luck. Lots of hugs Posted by Natalie**





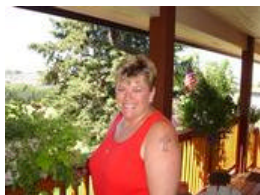
**I am currently on Avonex...however, I am switching to Copaxone because I can't take the pain and the side effects anymore. I have been on Avonex for about 2 years now. At first all went well. I had the usual side effects, flu-like symptoms, but that was managed by Tylenol. I always used the 8-hour Tylenol, as it seemed to last longer. I took two, then the injection and the symptoms weren't bad. However with me, as time went on, the injections became very painful. So much so that I would avoid them at all cost. I know the side effects differ with everyone so I wish you the best of luck. Just know that we are all pulling for you. (((HUGS)))) Take care, Rhonda**



**Are you sure you want the bad stuff with the good???? I was on Avonex for about 1 year. Had flu-like symptoms only one time...but I lost the use of my right leg, and all my bottom teeth chipped off down to the gum line. The only thing my Dr said to me was I should stop taking it. Most people do well so I would take it...I'm now on tysabri.. Big hugs to you, Maggie**

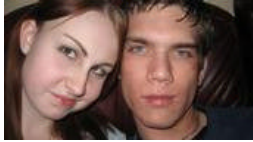


**To have MS you have to have 2 separate attacks" so that was May of 2005. They put me on Avonex "Just in Case". So, I've been on it ever since for almost 3 yrs now. Nothing new has happened since. My side effects are killer as well. I have RAPID heart beat SO fast (230 bpm) is what it went up to that when I wore a halter monitor for my cardio doc. He wanted to see how fast it went 3 hours after the injection was given. I still get a fast heart rate, but not as fast now...I'd say maybe 110bpm? I have sinus tachycardia too (just a plain fast heart...) so they think the meds just irritate that, that's why it goes fast...NO ONE else can give me a good answer cause my heart is fine. ANYWAY, sorry, do you take Aleve before you take the injection? It has helped me SO MUCH!!!! Take 2 and then 2 again in the morning. It helps. The meds DO knock you on your ass! I agree it takes about a good day to 2 days for me to really recover. Even still I'm very tired and depressed as well. I just find some will in my body to fight it off. But I have changed VERY much since taking it. Mood swings, left and right...very bad. happy go lucky one min, wanting to die the next. Like a light switch. Ugh...it's the meds. Ya know, if you can deal with it, and it isn't hurting you (which I read it seems it may be hurting you in some way with the blood work....) then try staying on it as long as u can. If you really can't take it, then switch. Talk to your doc see what they can do for you.. it's one of 4 choices I guess.. Hang in there hun. Message me if you want. It MAY get better the longer you stay on it. But be careful. That drug is NO JOKE! Posted by ::Nisey::**



**I have been on Avonex for almost 9 years. In the beginning it was kinda like that but I have never really gotten sick from it**

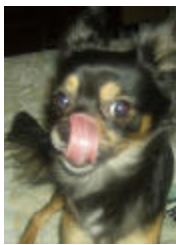
other than chills and body aches. I wish you could wait a bit longer because it does work. I'm usually down the first day but I take Tylenol before my injection and just eat healthy. It usually passes if I keep busy. Let me know how it goes with your doctor...Hugz Posted by Audrey



I was on Avonex a couple years ago and I had the same problem, the side effects were horrible and I couldn't do anything for the weekend also and then go back to school mon-fri!! I never did get used to it but may it turned out the avonex wasn't helping me so I switched to rebif. It may seem like things will never get better but they do I promise, I am living proof of that lol, or so my neuro says. I really hope things get better and/or you switch to another drug if this one isn't working properly. Feel better \*\*\*HUGS!!\*\*\* Posted by KaYLa



The side effect do get better in time. But if they are kickin' your butt this bad now, maybe a different medication is a good idea. If they found a problem with the blood work, I am sure they will be thinking of changing something for ya. I had major flu like symptoms for 2 days when I first started Avonex. But after a few months, it got shorter and shorter. I do my shots on Saturdays now, and all I do on Sundays is help 1 lady carry her laundry over to the wash room, and watch the races. So Sundays are gone for me. Major muscle weakness and spasms, pain like you have when you have the flu, and all of that. It usually gets better in time. But you may have to change meds. Make sure you talk with your neuro about this, and the problems they have found. ~~~~~Bubba



I have been on it since January, and it seems to have me rather stable for about the last 5-6 months... It can be a rough start sometimes for some folks but hang in there... there are some little tricks and stuff to try and make things a little smoother, you should read though the starter kit well, keep the phone number for the support folks handy they can be a great resource too, for almost ALL things MS related. All the best in mind body spirit Dave



I started Avonex in August, so I understand how you feel. I was worried about the liver and the depression as well. I have had my ups and downs with the drug but no real depression. Most of my symptoms have lessened and some are almost non existent now. Although, if I am tired the symptoms are stronger and affect me more. So get plenty of rest before taking it. Also, I use ice packs on my thigh before taking the shot. It tends to be numb and I don't feel the shot as bad. I have also waited 15 to 30 minutes after taking the shot to take advil or tylenol. I switch them up because they tend to not work as well if I only take one

of them all the time. I take 3 for the first dose and the next morning take 2 when I wake up. Hope this helps. Good luck. Posted by Natalie



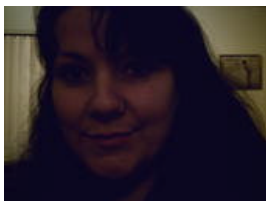
I was on Avonex when first dx, starting around Jan. 2001. I always made sure to take ibuprofen before my shot which I always took at night before I went to bed. If I FORGOT to take any kind of pain reliever, I would have the flu like symptoms, sometimes waking up from them. But that was the ONLY problem I had. (Which could be alleviated by taking ibuprofen.) Unfortunately for me, my next MRI showed more lesions so my neuro switched me to Copaxone. (but that is another story) I really liked that it was a once a week shot (even though it is IM). It was as if I could "forget" my MS most of the time. I didn't have a shot everyday or every other day to remind me. I felt good while I was on it and had NO relapses. I wish you the best of luck.... If you ever need to talk...please look me up. p.s. Isn't this place THE BEST!!! Thanx Stan!!! 😊 \*HUGS\* to you! ~Amy



I read the side-effects but I never anticipate them, neither should you unless you are allergic to a certain ingredient in the medicine or allergic to the medicine itself. You also cannot go by what someone else tells you. You are an entirely different person and your body is going to react in an entirely different way. You should take the Avonex and see how your body reacts and tolerates it. Felicia



I have been on avonex for almost 3 years, and well I can say the whole needles thing doesn't get any easier, I'm on ejection no 152 and you'll have side effects with every med and I can tell you for me the first time was the worst and now I barely have side effects at all ( they are more a little worse when I am close to my cycle but that is the only time I really notice.) The only thing I feel is sensitive to hot & cold and sometimes I'll get a headache, and slight joint pain. I know others may have it worse. I consider myself lucky, but I do have a fear of needles and that part is not easy for me. Good luck and I hope everything goes well, I can tell you a lot of my symptoms went away with the shots and that's why I make myself go through with it every time. It's either the needle or the other outcome and none of us want to get worse. I guess if I think it "might help" I'm willing to do something incredibly uncomfortable to get there. Again good luck, and keep your spirits up having a good outlook and something to look forward to helps a lot. Lori- Posted by Lady D



I've been taking avonex for about 4 years now, (since my diagnosis) I've found that taking it at night right before I go to bed helps me, I sleep through most of the side affects and then pop a few advil in the morn to deal with my "interferon hangover "also I take it the night before my day off as I tend to

drag the next day. It seem to work well for me, I haven't had any major "episodes" since I've been taking it. Good luck to you, and try not to worry that's the big killer. Hugs to you! Posted by Michelle



I've been on avonex since April 2006. The side effects turned out to be not as bad as I thought they would be. They only time I really feel them is when I am already sick with a cold or virus. I also take Naproxen before the shot as well which helps me get through the night and wake up to a better day! Good luck! ~Jill



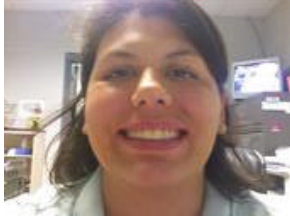
I've been on Avonex since 2003, and I still get FLU like side effects...it is not as bad as it was when I first started. My neuro says take Aleve or Tylenol prior to injection. I have discovered that if I take the sleeping pill and muscle relaxant he prescribed I rest better even though I wake up shaking uncontrollably and soooooo thirsty. Like I said the side effects did ease up for me and it has been a real miracle drug for me (knock on wood) You might try to take it on a night that you know you'll have the next day to recoup. Hang in there... I have take it during day recently and was able to stay up going, then again I taken it during the day and it kicked my butt.....very unpredictable. Posted by Rhonda



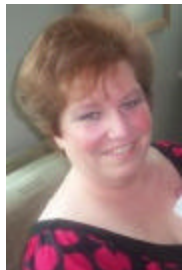
I know that the size of the needle is scary, but the once a week part makes it worth while. I always use an ice pack about 10 minutes before I do the injection. It basically numbs up the injection site. The most important thing I can tell you is to make some practice injections. Take a pen, or a pencil in hour hand just like you would the needle. The reason for this is to get use to getting the needle all the way in, so you don't have to push it thru the rest of the way little by little. Once you do the injections once or twice, it gets easier. Plus, you don't have to worry about it for a full week. **SIDE EFFECTS:** the most common one is flu like symptoms. They last about 6 to 8 hours, but it varies with each person. Ask your doctor about all of this info, because I am use to it, and may not describe it the best. I am glad you're getting on something.

I myself am on Avonex. I love the fact that I only have to do it once a week. Side effects for me are just flu like symptoms that last about 6 hours usually about 4 to 6 hours after the injection. As far as the length of the needle, it's not that bad once you do it 2 or 3 times. I used a pen or a Popsicle stick to practice with. Hold it in your hand the same way you plan on holding the needle. The faster you get the needle in, the better. We don't want to get it half way in and then stop. That makes it even harder. I wish I could be more help sweetie. I'm glad you're getting some treatment started. I'll be praying for you and for only good things to come your way. **BE SAFE, BE STRONG** Posted by (Bubba)





**I take Avonex and am terrified of needles. The 1 1/2 inch needles come in the kit but they send me 1 inch needles to use instead. They aren't as bad. It still takes me a few minutes to psych myself up but the smaller needle isn't as bad. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the smaller ones and good luck! And the flulike symptoms went away after a few months. Just drink plenty of water on shot day and I usually take mine in the evening and take some Nyquil and try to sleep through most of them. Angela**



**I've been on Avonex for 3 years and don't mind the shots at all. I really never did...and I'm scared of needles. I was also concerned about the length of the needle but after talking to a friend of mine that's a nurse she explained that once you get through the top layer of skin....that's where the nerves are that would cause you any pain....so really the length of the needle makes no difference. In the beginning I did have some pretty miserable side effects....kind of like the flu. Headache, upset stomach, fever, severe chills, and general aches. Just remember to take some Motrin, Aleve or something a few hours before your shot to help with the side effects and then another dose of whatever you chose after your shot. Hang in there and you'll do fine. Good luck and big HUGS....Brenda Posted by STRESS FREE....THE WAY TO BE.....**



**Yes, it is very normal to have flu-like systems. They should get better with time. When I took it I had to take tylenol or motrin as soon as I took the shot, then I would wake up halfway through the night and need more! I always took my shot on Saturday, then spent the next day, all day, in bed. I would also have to take something around the clock for the pain. So, anyway, good luck to you, you're in my prayers. (((hugs))) to you!! Lisa**



**I have also had the same problem, I call them chills times 100. Mine hurt soo bad. I take 2 excedrine and 2 aleve at the time of my shot and then take a tylenol w/codeine at bedtime to "relieve" the symptoms. I have talked with my neuro and Biogen and they have both said that I am just "extra sensitive" to the meds. They also told me that it can take up to a full year for some people to get used to the med, and because of the benefits I am willing to stay on it for a year and hope that the symptoms will subside. Take care and know that you are not alone with the "shocking chills". Posted by Sara**

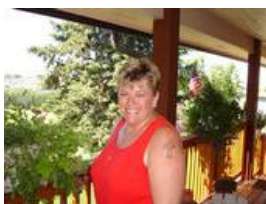


**I WAS ON AVONEX FOR ALMOST 3 YEARS AND I DID HAVE SIDE EFFECTS THAT WERE AWFUL IN THE BEGINNING. CHILLS, FEVER, BODY ACHE, I JUST FELT LIKE I HAD A BAD CASE OF THE FLU.. BUT WITH EACH SHOT IT DOES GET BETTER. THE**

**MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT SHE DRINKS LOT'S OF WATER THE DAY BEFORE AND THE DAY OF HER INJECTION, HAVE HER SPEAK TO THE DR THAT PRESCRIBED IT TO HER ABOUT WHAT TO TAKE BEFORE THE SHOT. ALSO LETTING IT GET TO ROOM TEMP HELPS NOT BURN SO MUCH. THE FIRST COUPLE OF SHOTS SHE MAY BE FRIGHTENED BY THE SIDE EFFECTS, BUT IT DOES GET BETTER. JUST BE THERE FOR HER TO HELP WITH THE FEAR PART AND POSSIBLE STAY THE NIGHT TO HELP WITH THE FEVER AND SUCH.. SOME PEOPLE HAVE NO SIDE EFFECTS BUT I THINK MOST DO.. GOING IN WITH A POSTIVE ATTITUDE IS VITAL TO GETTING THROUGH ANY TREATMENT.. YOU CAN ALSO CALL THE COMPANY THAT MAKES IT, BIOGEN AND THEY HAVE PEOPLE THERE THAT WILL ANSWER ANY KIND OF QUESTION THAT YOU MAY HAVE.. BUT I ALSO THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO SPEAK TO HER NEURO ABOUT WHAT TO TAKE BEFORE HER SHOT.. I WISH YOU BOTH THE BEST AND YOU ARE BOTH IN MY PRAYERS AND THOUGHTS.. SENDING YOU BOTH MANY HUGS AND PLEASE KEEP US POSTED IN HOW SHE DOES.. Tina Ree**



**I can tell you I am 25 years old I have been on avonex for just under 4 years I have had the same symptoms, left side numbness and headaches... lesions . I was dxed 4 years ago, it took a year to dx. but I was quickly rxd Avonex. I know the Shots are intimidating to say the least. the big needle and OMG it has to go all the way in... Are you kidding? That was my reaction. And I can say the first shot is always the worst and the re action your body has is first few times is always the worst but your daughter's body will get used to it. She can expect to have cold chills and a mild fever and achy joints much like the flu, sensitive to temp change. I had all of these but I can tell you it feels like hell and a week later you feel it again but three years later you take the shot and go out to dinner and have no symptoms. So yes over time it gets better. And my numbness has gone away and only comes back when I have flare ups (rarely) so there is hope and things will be great for your daughter. As for the side affects the flu symptoms will suck but if she takes the med a few hours before bed time with some sort of motrin (the dr will usually prescribe 800mgs of something) she should be able to sleep though most of the symptoms with a "hangover" in the morning. That's what I usually do and it has gotten me though these years! Remember the first time will be the hardest! Good Luck!!!! HUGS! Posted by Lady D**



**I have been on Avonex for almost 9 years and my body adjusted pretty good. They always said that I might get flu like symptoms but never really did. I always did my injection at night before I went to bed that way I would sleep through the effects of the shots. Then my insurance changed and I had to start going into my doctor for the shots so now I get them every Monday morning. I take a couple of tylenol before my shot and they even**

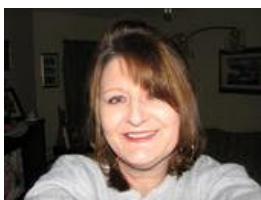
have a prescription for something that they can give to you to take before the shot to make the reactions go away or not have them as severe. I have the Relapsing-Remitting type and since I have been on the injections of Avonex the only things I go through are body aches, being bitchy and fatigue. When my body says its tired then I lay down and follow my gut. Hopefully things will calm down with how you are feeling from them once you have been on them for a bit....My best to you....Posted by Audrey



I am on avonex too. I had the side effects for about 2 months and then it got better. Now the only time I have the side effects are when I am already sick or just plain run down and tired. The side effects will get better and they will lessen the longer you take it. I completely understand what you are going thru. Don't forget to take advil or tylenol. I always take 3 instead of the recommended 2. It does help. Keep changing up when you take them like how long before or after your shot until you find the best fit for you. That helps with the side effects. Also, if you are getting the chills drink something hot it definitely helps. Good Luck. Will help any way I can. Posted by Natalie

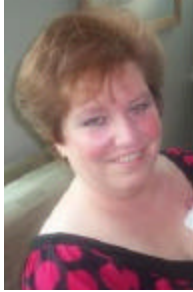


I was diagnosed in 99 with Relapsing Remitting and I had a choice of the type of treatment I wanted to take. I chose Avonex because it was only one time a week. When I started my treatment I injected my legs and yes it smarted but I thought oh well once a week not a big deal. I have never gotten sick like vomiting and having it last for more than a day. Before I injected I took 2 tylenol gave myself the shot and just carried on my day like nothing happened. About 6 hours into the shot my skin hurt to touch, i became very bitchy, headache, and sore muscles. I would just take my clothes off and lay in the middle of my bed and didn't move. Took my Zanex to go to sleep and woke up the next morning alright but still a little edgy. Still to this day I just tell myself to try...I would say to you to try to hang in there for a bit longer until it has plenty of time to get used to your body unless you have already been on it for a bit. During the peek of my injection I will lay on heat or get in the hot tub with a glass of wine and really tell myself its helping so go through it. I'm not you and you have my prayers that it will get easier sooner than later. I'm here for you if you want to talk more. The needles I agree do such and every time I get an injection i swear they have grown more each week. Hugs and keep in touch...My best Posted by Audrey



I'm on my 6th week of the Avonex. It is pure hell. They tell you side effects no longer than 24 hours. That's straight BS. I'm sick 'til the day before I have to inject again. The highest I've found my temp at was 104.7. The chills are horrendous & it feels like someone has scalded my face and scalp with hot water plus beat me all over. My clothes hurt my body. It does

seem to be letting up a little & last week I actually had 3 good days where I felt like my old self. So I'm hoping the drug is beginning to work. I took my injection last night & endured pure hell all night long - didn't sleep a wink.. Then was nauseated all day on top of all the rest of it. And, oh yeah, last night I had a rash all over my body. I know this isn't helping you any - all I'm saying is I think it is letting up a little & I'm getting to where I'm not sick as many days as the beginning. Hang in there sweetie - it'll get better. Have a wonderful night!  
Posted by Christine



I'm sure this isn't what you want to hear but it **WILL** get better. I've been on Avonex for over 5 years now and have never missed a dose. I used to do my legs and my daughter would do my arms but my legs bruise so easily that we stick to my arms unless she's out of town and can't do it. The side effects were hell in the beginning....but after about 6 months things were much better. I still get the chills occasionally and always get a headache. But there's a few things you can do to help. Take your motrin or whatever you're taking about 3 hours ahead of the shot. If this isn't

helping check with your neuro about some prednisone. I took a single dose of prednisone 2-3 hours before my shots for a while and that really helped. Good Luck and try to hang in there! Posted by (Brenda) STRESS FREE..THE WAY TO BE.....



Rotate your sites always....legs and arms. Is the weakness in the leg from the MS or Avenox? Consult your neuro and check with him no matter what we suggest! Hugs to you! Here is to truly hoping the leg weakness improves for you.  
Posted by Danae



I agree with those that said rotate your sites. Also, talk to your pharmacy or the Avonex help line and make sure you have the shorter needle. It is only a 1/4" shorter, but makes a **HUGE** difference. I always just used my legs, but with the shorter needles I can do the back of my arms with no problem! I was having weird sensations in my legs to. Usually the leg that I

injected would be weak for a couple of days, but the shorter needle helped and talking to my neuro helped too! If you need anything please feel free to contact me! Much Love Shell



I've been on Avonex for about 4 years now. At first I was scared of the big needle and the side effects. My husband is willing to give me the shots, and it did take a while for us to adjust....but practice makes perfect and now we hardly even bat an eye when it's shot night!



I take 3 Motrin at the time of my evening shot. Then when I wake up, I drink lots of water with breakfast (and coffee!) and take 2 more Motrin. I find the more water I drink the day of and after the shot makes a HUGE difference in how I feel. I do usually feel a little extra tired and call it my "hangover" day. It's never felt bad enough to interfere with my daily routine. For me, it took a few months to get the hang of it and find out what worked.

Also, when you are just starting, they will let you do the titration, you will start out with a half dose and work up to the full dose, so it won't be such a shock to your system.

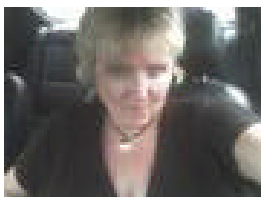
I must say that I really prefer only having to think about my shot once per week, and I have never had an injection site reaction. On my "shot night" I make sure and have a special treat, like ice cream or a movie or whatever.

The one surprise with Avonex is that I now have an alcohol sensitivity. I can't drink more than 3 drinks or else I get an extremely bad hangover. Wasn't expecting that! So now I just make sure I keep track of how much I've drank on my monthly "mom's night out" binges! So if you like to drink, just be careful and be aware! Heather



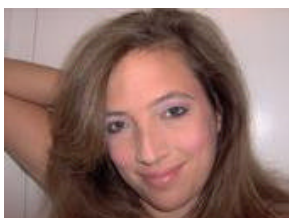
I was on Avonex and had awful flu-like symptoms. Taking a couple of Tylenol about an hour before the shot seemed to lessen the bad side-effects usually, and I would do the shot before bed on a weekend night so I could sleep in the next day. I say that the Tylenol "usually" helped because it wasn't a sure thing, however there were other times I didn't have any bad side-effects. Good luck. Try heading the flu feeling off at the pass so

it can't grab a good hold on you. Maria



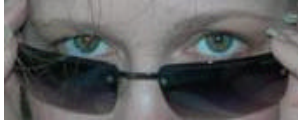
Ibuprofen (Advil..whatever ya wanna call it) is my drug of choice. I take 3 before my shot and generally 3 the following morning. I remember it took a few months to get over some of the side effects, perhaps the same bodes for Avonex as well. We're all different and some interferons may not be well suited. Call the Avonex nurses or better yet, call your Neuro if

these side effects are not tolerable. You have MS and that's bad enough, you shouldn't have to suffer with unending bad side effects of something that's suppose to be helping you. Hang in there and keep us posted. Much love and hugs ~Shirley



Advil works best for me. I took Avonex for 3 years and then my doctor suggested I switch to rebif, which I take now. I found taking the shot before bed and then taking advil every 4 hours worked for me. I'd actually set my alarm so I could

take it throughout the night! LOL! I felt that the side effects got somewhat better but they never actually went away. I actually have less side effects with the Rebif - which is the same medicine, just higher dosage more frequently - weird, right? Anyway, good luck and many (((HUGS)))! Posted by Frany



Hi. I have been on Avonex for almost two years now. My last MRI showed no NEW growth to existing lesions and there were no new ones. That is progress. I have stopped taking Avonex in the time I have been on it. I would get so tired of dreading the side effects but now that I know it works for me for now, I cannot give up. So, side effects. I dread them. I remember reading in the initial information package that one lady said she could take her injection and go on about her day doing things like attending ball games with her children and caring for her family and home. Okay, I am not like that lady as much as I wish I were. There has been help for me though with managing my side effects. I would also like to say that not every shot is ever the same. Some are easy and some aren't.

I plan my shots on Sunday when the family is relaxed and often involved in church activities. My neuro advised the following and it has HELPED me. Thirty minutes prior to my injection, I take one 10 mg Lortab for pain because my back is injured and I can't stand lying still for long. I take one Compazine for nausea and two extra strength Tylenol for ache and fever. I follow up with another Compazine as needed and I take two more Tylenol two hours after the injection. That is normally all it takes to keep things under control.

I still feel aches and cramps in my legs, hands and arms but nothing as severe as I used to have. The nausea is almost non-extinct. The fever and horrible fatigue are just a given so I need to rest. I find that the day following my shot is the worst as far as fatigue so Mondays are my recoup day.

If you can, talk to your neuro about side effect management. It has really helped me not to stop a treatment that I plan to use as long as it keeps working.  
Valorie

P.S. A friend of mine with MS is prescribed a small dose injection of Predisone prior to injection. She has had some success with it. I cannot however personally advise how this works as I haven't tried it before.



I started Avonex in Dec. '06 right after I was dx'ed. The first few times the symptoms really did suck!!! I wasn't sure which day to do them and my neuro did say they are best done in the evening, also wasn't sure which day would be best to take them. He told me he would probably do them on Sunday evening, he said that Monday's suck anyway! LOL

**This is what I finally figured out to do and did tell my dr. and I think it is like someone else had said that they will usually tell you to do whatever works best for you.**

**About 30 min to an hour before my injection I will take 2 1/2 Tylenol PM. Then I've figured out that if I am sleeping and begin to get chills and wake up, I wake up think, "I'm cold", then it's like the sleepiness overtakes those thoughts!**

**Don't know if that will work for anyone else or if they have tried it but it works great for me! I do have to say that those symptoms have lessened over time though which is great!!!!**

**Oh yeah....one of the nurses did call from Bio-gen (Avonex makers) and she hadn't heard the Tylenol PM thing but said if it worked for me to go with it. Also, she did mention the water thing that someone else here did. She said to make sure and drink plenty of water the day before, the day of and the day after your injection to make sure and keep yourself very hydrated! Posted by H e a t h e r**



**We aren't doctors-gotta say that. If you ask yours he'll probably say whatever works best for you. Ask him/her anyway. I too used Advil-liquigels. 3 before my shot then 2 every 5 hours, 3 the next morning and 2 every 5 hours that day. You'll have to see if it gets better. My flu like symptoms lasted 6 months and I was on Avonex 1 1/2 years. I'm starting Tysabri in 2 weeks. Some people like tylenol, some advil, you'll have to see what works for you. Live, Love, Laugh, Steph**