



Achondroplasia in my own words

Talking about achondroplasia.

Have you ever been asked about your body or achondroplasia and felt unsure of what to say?

You're not alone. Some people find that having a quick explanation ready can make those moments a little easier. Just a few sentences can help someone understand what achondroplasia is and remind them that there's so much more to you than your achondroplasia.

But here's something important:

You don't owe anyone an explanation. It's your body, and it's completely up to you what you share, when you share it, and who you share it with. Just because someone asks a personal question doesn't mean you have to answer. It's totally okay to say, *"I'd rather not talk about that."*

This worksheet is here for you if you do want to create a quick go-to response. You can fill it out on your own, or work through it with a parent, friend, or anyone you trust. There are no right or wrong answers. This is your story to tell.

And just a reminder: Bodies come in all shapes and sizes. And every one of them deserves respect.

Let's get started!

Pick one or two options (or write your own) for each of the questions below. Then you'll use your picks to build your own 1-minute message.

1. What do you want people to know?

- ☐ I have achondroplasia.
- ☐ I'm a little person, which means I have short stature.
- ☐ I was born with a difference in how my bones grow.
- ☐ I have dwarfism – it affects how my arms and legs grow.

- ☐ My body is built a little differently.
- ☐ I'm proud of who I am.
- ☐ People come in all shapes and sizes.
- ☐ Something else:

2. How does achondroplasia affect your body?

- ☐ I'm shorter than most kids my age.
- ☐ My arms and legs are shorter than most people's.
- ☐ I do most things other kids do, just in my own way.
- ☐ I can still run and play, just maybe at my own speed.

- ☐ Sometimes I use a step stool or another tool to help me reach things.
- ☐ Something else: _____

3. What do you want people to remember about you?

- ☐ I'm proud of who I am.
- ☐ I'm more than my achondroplasia.
- ☐ I'm proud of myself, my differences, and my individuality.
- ☐ I'm proud of my height.
- ☐ I like to try new things and do my best.
- ☐ My height doesn't stop me from doing cool things.

- ☐ I'm fun to hang out with.
- ☐ I might do some things differently than you.
- ☐ I want people to see *me*, not just how tall I am.
- ☐ Something else: _____

Now let's build your response using the parts you picked!

Here's an example:

"I have dwarfism. It affects how my arms and legs grow. I'm shorter than most kids, and sometimes I use a step stool or another tool to help me reach things. I'm proud of who I am."

Use this space to write your own version:



Want to practice?

Try saying your message out loud, to a parent, a friend, a teacher, or even your dog or cat. You can tweak it whenever you want – it's yours!