



Amy Parulis
Cyclist 2015

It's not about me. It's all about Madeline. I started the Mad About Madeline team for Closer to Free in honor of my 8-year-old friend from East Lyme, CT. Madeline is battling cancer for the second time in her young life. Yes, you read that right.

Back when she was 4, Madeline was diagnosed with ALL (acute lymphocytic leukemia) and received treatments at Smilow Cancer Hospital. Unfortunately, this past December she was diagnosed, not with a relapse, but a new cancer, AML (acute myeloid leukemia). Prior to going to Dana-Farber for her bone marrow transplant Madeline spent more time at Smilow in preparation for the transplant.

I've never ridden my bike more than 32 miles, but I am determined to do the metric century. If Madeline can fight cancer head on with the strength of a tiger, I can certainly spend a few hours on my bike. Team Mad About Madeline rides to thank the wonderful staff at Smilow for all they have done for Madeline and her family through her countless treatments. We ride because she cannot. We ride to show her that one day she will be there with us. We ride for the smiles on the faces of the patients that will be outside to greet us on ride day. We ride because we can.

Even if you aren't a cyclist you can still help out. Goodness knows that the volunteers at the rest stops will be my best friends on ride day. If you can't ride, come out and volunteer. Cheer on all of the amazing riders that together are working toward the goal of helping more cancer patients become Closer to Free. Oh, and by the way, if you see someone riding, hiking, or running around New England with a large stuffed tiger on their back, that's me and Arnold. I carry Arnold around to get pictures of him doing fun things to share with Madeline and help to put a smile on her beautiful face. You can follow Madeline's progress on the [Mad about Madeline Facebook page](#).

