

## **SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Dear Mrs. Wright:

We are writing on behalf of our daughter, Katelyn Martin, who will be attending second grade at Springfield Elementary School for the 2004-2005 school year.

Katelyn was diagnosed with juvenile dermatomyositis (JM) in May 2003. JM is a chronic, autoimmune disease characterized by skin rashes and muscle weakness. In Katelyn's case, she has a moderate rash and experiences significant fatigue and weakness throughout the day. Other than the rash, there are not many external signs of her condition. There is no known cause of JM, but we do know it is not contagious.

Like many JM children, Katelyn is taking prednisone, a steroid medicine that suppresses her immune system, along with several other systemic and topical medicines. Since her immune system is weakened by the medicines, it is very important that we are informed of any contagious illnesses in the school, not just in her class alone. She is also very sensitive to UV rays, both by fluorescent lighting and the sun's rays, so we keep sunscreen on her daily and try to keep her out of the sun during the peak hours from 10 am to 4 pm. She has good days and bad days, and we will keep you and her teachers informed of her progress and any changes throughout the year. We also hope you will let us know of any changes you note in her behavior, appearance or ability to keep up with other children.

Our main goal is for Katelyn to have a successful school year, both by learning and enjoying her experience. You should not have different academic or social expectations of Katelyn than you have of other children. If you or her teachers feel there are any problems or needs to discuss, please don't hesitate to contact us: John Martin, (000) 000-0000, or Abbie Martin, (000) 111-1111.

We have attached some general information from The Myositis Association concerning juvenile dermatomyositis and the different medicines. Please let us know if you would like additional materials. You'll also find information on TMA's web site at [www.myositis.org](http://www.myositis.org).

Thank you for your help and support.

Sincerely,

John and Abbie Martin