

Man spends 43 years in wheelchair on wrong diagnosis

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A Portuguese man spent 43 years in a wheelchair because of a mistaken medical diagnosis, finally re-learning to walk only in his fifties, a newspaper reported on Sunday.

When Rufino Borrego was 13, he was diagnosed by a Lisbon hospital as having incurable muscular dystrophy, the *Jornal de Noticias* reported.

After that he used a wheelchair to get around for more than four decades—until a neurologist realised in 2010 that he in fact suffered from a different disease that weakens the muscles, [myasthenia](#).

The [rare disease](#) can be treated simply by taking asthma medication—and just a year after his new diagnosis, Borrego was able to walk for the first time to his usual neighbourhood cafe.

"We thought it was a miracle," Manuel Melao, owner of the cafe in Alandroal, southeast Portugal, told the newspaper.

Now aged 61, Borrego is able to live a normal life, requiring only two physiotherapy sessions a year.

He insists he harbours no ill-feelings against the hospital that made the original diagnosis, acknowledging that myasthenia was almost unknown in the medical profession in the 1960s.

"I just want to make use of my life," he said.

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