

AFTD MEDIA INTERVIEW TIP SHEET



Thank you for your willingness to speak with the media. The following are some tips and tricks to help you stay on message, remember to mention AFTD to get the most FTD and AFTD awareness out of your interview.

What to Wear

- Simple is best! Avoid clothing that is white (it will wash you out on camera) or has large patterns (it is distracting). Jewelry that makes noise when you move will cause problems with microphones and should also be avoided.
- We want you to be comfortable and confident. We suggest blue or dark gray for men, and solid colors for women.

Interview Prep

- Reporters are good at conveying the concrete, detailed facts of a story to their audiences; they need you to share FTD's emotional impact. Share feeling words.
- We have prepared talking points to help you answer questions. These are intended as a guide that you can rephrase in your own words.
- Be sure to have a succinct, easily understandable way to explain the disease of FTD (again, the talking points will help here).
- News interviews are supposed to feel like conversations, not a one-sided speech. Talk as if you are sharing your thoughts with your best friend.

General Interview Tips

When the reporter asks you a question, you can take a moment to think of how you want to respond. A couple of sentences is what they are looking for in an answer.

- Reporters are pros at keeping the interview on a good pace. Don't worry about running the interview; reporters will ask you the questions.
- Whenever possible, use lay language; avoid technical jargon as much as possible.
- The reporter may ask many questions that do not make it into the story. They are gathering background information. They may ask you to repeat an answer; this is just so they can capture the best version of your answer.

- The reporter is not going to try to grill you, like they would a politician or other powerful figure. They want your FTD expertise – and FTD expertise is something you have plenty of.
- Please remember to direct people to www.theaftd.org for more information.

Staying on Message

Deflecting. If you are asked a question that you are not comfortable answering, here are some answers that you could provide:

- “I am not the right person to answer this.”
- “I can put you in touch with the person who can answer that question.”
- “That is not my area of expertise, but I can put you in touch with the person who can answer your question.”

Flagging. Use these phrases to emphasis your message:

- “I want to make sure you understand that...”
- “I want to make sure you understand that...”
- “I think what’s most important to your listeners is...”

Post-Publication Follow Up

- If you feel the reporter did good, accurate work, be sure to send a thank you email (or handwritten note).
- If you notice an error in their coverage, politely thank them for writing about FTD, but inform them of the error and ask if it can be corrected.
- Share the story on your social media and encourage your friends to do so.

Some of the above tips come courtesy of Sally Winter, an Indianapolis public relations specialist who lost her mother, Lolly Phillips, to FTD in 1993.