

kisses for Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn Warne was recently diagnosed with a form of Leukemia known as Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) as well as a serious bone marrow disorder known as Myelofibrosis. AML and Myelofibrosis are most common in people 50 years of age and older. Kaitlyn will be 2 years of age on Saturday, September 13, 2014.

In early August 2014, upon waking up with bruises and expressing pain with a simple diaper change, her mom took her to the doctor to find that she was very sick. A simple blood draw revealed she had low red and white blood cell counts and was extremely low on platelets. She was rushed to Sanford Children's Hospital in Sioux Falls and admitted immediately for a blood transfusion and platelet transfusion.

The next day she had a bone marrow biopsy. The initial observation revealed that she had Leukemic Blasts and severe scarring in her bones. These Blasts are abnormal cells that are unable to develop into mature white blood cells. They take over the bone marrow and prevent production of adequate numbers of other types of blood cells, such as platelets, red blood cells, and healthy white blood cells. The scarring in her bones is known as Myelofibrosis (a serious bone marrow disorder that disrupts your body's normal production of blood cells, resulting in extensive scarring in your bone marrow).



The bone marrow biopsy results were sent off to the Mayo Clinic as well as the University of Minnesota Children's Hospital for review. During this time, Kaitlyn was released to go home from the hospital with a scheduled check-up the following week. She returned to the Doctor a week later and found that her liver and spleen had almost doubled in size from the previous week; therefore she was admitted to the hospital again. She would immediately get another blood transfusion as well as another platelet transfusion.

The Doctor also ordered genetic testing to see if there were any abnormalities that may give them more answers. The genetic testing revealed that she is missing chromosome 2,

chromosomes 9 and 11 have switched places and are intertwined and she has 4 sets of chromosome 7. All of these genetic abnormalities play a role in Kaitlyn's diagnosis.

On August 25, Kaitlyn underwent another bone marrow biopsy in addition to having a spinal tap to verify whether or not she had any Leukemia cells in her spinal fluid. The results showed an increase in Leukemic Blasts. The good news is that there were very few white blood cells in her spinal fluid, which leads the Doctor to believe that it has not reached her spine.

Kaitlyn started chemotherapy on August 26 and has since had several more blood and platelet transfusions. She will undergo two rounds of chemo over the next two months. If all goes well, she will then be transferred to the University of Minnesota Children's Hospital in Minneapolis for a Bone Marrow Transplant. The Bone Marrow Transplant will consist of at least 100 days of hospitalization with limited visitation.

Since having children 6 years ago, Heather has worked part-time in the evenings at Dairy Queen to help support her family. Due to Kaitlyn's hospitalization and now future BMT, Heather is not able to work. She struggles with the guilt of not being able to work to help support her family, as well as finding the time for her other children as she wants to make sure someone is with Kaitlyn at all times. As an Electrician for Thompson Electric, Matt is continuing to work to support their family. When he is not at work, he is also juggling time between his two older children and being with Kaitlyn. They live 30 miles outside of Sioux Falls and commute each day, twice a day for work and to be with Kaitlyn.

Please consider making a donation to help alleviate some financial stress this wonderful family is dealing with. Just like any other family, you don't think this could happen to you. Just six weeks prior, in June 2014, all of Kaitlyn's blood counts were normal. Sadly, overnight, their world was turned upside down.

Donations can be mailed to:
Heather & Matt Warne
567 N. Ford St.
Humboldt, SD 57035