

Meet Our Hero: Drake

Story Told by His Mother

Drake started showing signs of not being himself in June of 2011. First, it was a bug bite, we thought. That turned into Cellulitis, which was treated with antibiotics. Then, fevers started, which lead to more antibiotics. And finally, before we knew it, an ER visit and admission to Children's Hospital.

It was Wednesday night, July 20th, Drake's fever returned and he started his shaking again. He was very restless the night before and the day before he was awake for a total of 5 hours. We decided to take him to the ER in Fremont where they were concerned he had spinal meningitis. Because of this, they decided to Life Fly Drake to Children's in Omaha. He had to go by himself and did a great job. Once he was at Children's the tests started. His blood count was very low along with his white blood cells. We met with the doctor, nurse and oncologist who said it appeared that Drake has some type of cancerous cell in his blood stream. They never ruled out that this could be just a serious blood infection. Through the night we were able to get his blood levels to improve. Drake underwent lots of test that day and had a bone marrow biopsy, spinal tap and pick line placed at 2:30 pm on 7/21/11. He did awesome with the procedures. At that time, the doctor felt very confident that he had Leukemia, and we just had to wait on the full results of the tests to indicate what kind. He mentioned that it appeared to be ALL (Acute Lymphatic Leukemia), the most common seen in children and has a very good prognosis. He started chemotherapy right away and we waited to hear our diagnosis. It turned

out that he did have ALL, however, his was a rare type. His B cells were involved; however, they were mature which placed him in the 1% of all ALL cases. We were set up on an aggressive protocol including chemo, spinal taps, and Drake got a Port. We were told Drake's rarity the following Tuesday after his bone marrow biopsy.

We started maintenance on June 26, 2012, and it took about 6 months for Drake to figure out the maintenance world. He started off well and then had some delays with low counts. Christmas of 2012 he fevered and it wasn't until Jan 2013 after a hospital stay and the start of IVIG when things started turning around. He is overall doing better, and his counts are staying strong. We continue to fight and are excited to celebrate more than 3 years from diagnosis date on July 21st, 2014!



Drake - Fremont, NE, Age 4