

Addisyn

“The staff not only made Addy feel like she was important but did the same for her father and me.”

-Kelly, Addisyn's mom

Watch Addisyn's story from the ABC30 "Futures Worth Fighting For" Telethon by clicking here.



It was November 2020 when Kelly and Joey received the news that catapulted their family into a world they never asked to explore. Addisyn, their sweet three-year-old daughter, vibrant and extroverted, faced a reality that no child should ever have to come to terms with: Addisyn had cancer.

Only months before, Addisyn was busy celebrating her third birthday. This was when she first developed symptoms. That October, Addisyn expressed discomfort in her chest and ran a 21-day fever. She made numerous trips to a local hospital in Merced, where they first attributed her pain to normal symptoms of COVID-19.

But the next day, Addisyn's neck swelled painfully and she lost feeling in her left arm. She was rushed to Valley Children's Hospital where she had a biopsy of her neck performed, and their worst fears were brought to life.

Addisyn's initial diagnosis was that she had lymphoma. Further examination and testing revealed Addison had an extremely rare and aggressive cancer called histiocytic sarcoma (HS), which comprises approximately 1 out of every 10 million pediatric cancer diagnoses. Histiocytic sarcoma develops in the body when white blood

cells begin dividing uncontrollably. Addisyn's HS would be treated as a high-risk leukemia.

Experiencing childhood cancer is hard, especially when it's a rare cancer without a clear roadmap of available medications and treatments. Addisyn spent the next six months in the hospital, receiving chemotherapy treatment, blood transfusions and fighting off infections. She contracted a C. diff infection and mucositis (inflammation caused by some cancer therapies) twice, developed an allergic reaction to her medications and was put on a feeding tube. For a period of time, her weight dropped to just 15 lbs., and she lost the ability to walk.

But her nurses were always there to guide her, eventually teaching her how to walk again. They motivated her with stickers, temporary tattoos and a lot of laughter. Throughout Addisyn's treatment, Valley Children's helped the family keep their spirits up. From teaching Kelly and Joey how to give her injections from home to explaining every step of the process, the family was reassured that Addisyn was under the care of a team that was managing her treatment while prioritizing their peace of mind. Today, Addisyn is in maintenance and enjoying life on the road to recovery.

Futures Worth Fighting For.

valleychildrens.org/foundation