



LEUKEMIA &
LYMPHOMA
SOCIETY®

fighting blood cancers

Meet your Honored Hero

BLAKE

- *Birthday: 6/22/1999*
- *Diagnosed: 12/2001*
- *Diagnosis: Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL)*
- *In Remission: 12/2004*

In October 2001 Blake was only 2 1/2 years old. Blake was a normal baby doing the baby stuff, until he started getting fevers. Through taking him to the doctors & being told it is the time of year for this to occur we could only take the doctors advice. Give him pain relief & keep an eye on it. The fevers would come & go. After about six weeks the fevers came back. This was not right. One night in December 2001 Blake had a fever of 104.3. This was crazy. We

called the doctor & went in for a check-up. The doctor did a few checks & noticed a few things. They felt around & noticed his spleen & liver were enlarged. Great, a parents worst nightmare that something is wrong with their child. The doctor told us that we would need to go to the emergency room right away. We did.

As we got to the Children's E.R we were taken right in & put in a room. The first thing they said was that they needed to do a blood test. This was hard because his veins kept collapsing. It's very difficult to see your child suffer. Finally, they got some blood for the test.

I was lying on the bed with Blake lying down on top of me. After awhile nurses started bringing stuffed animals. Not one or two but like five. You know when your gut starts feeling weird. That's what it was. After a bit longer a doctor, an Oncologist, came in. He stared to explain about blood cells & what Blake's were. BOOM. We were hit with the diagnosis of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. I was like a waterfall with tears. Why, Why, Why?

Right away it was an information overload - the treatment protocol, resources, hospitalization, I mean everything. The only thing I was thinking was: "Is my boy going to be okay?" It was intense. The beginning of treatment was nothing



like I have ever seen: chemo, steroids, IV's, I mean everything. It was overwhelming. Not only the treatment but to see your child physically go from a normal child to seeing what effects the medications have. His face & body were swollen from the steroids. The chemo was crazy with side affects to boot. His eating habits, sleep & manner all changed. Not only is his life changing but ours as well.

This is going to be a rollercoaster ride. Not to mention what is going through the mind of a 2 1/2 year old. They haven't even hardly began life's road.

After the three year treatment plan Blake was in remission. I have to say if it wasn't for the doctors, nurses & LLS, this would have been a big struggle. For that I bid a huge THANK YOU.

It is almost 10 years since diagnosis - holy cow! Blake has become an incredible young man. Blake now gets check ups once a year as part of his plan & he's doing GREAT! He's involved in soo many activities: Boy Scouts of America, with the rank of Second Class & on his way to become an Eagle Scout. He is also the Color Guard Captain of the troop. Blake LOVES to FISH & is a member of the WPB fishing Club.

My son Blake is my hero. When something goes wrong with me, I just think about the journey he had. Blake is an inspiration to us all.

- Dave Naumann



What is acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL)?

"Leukemia" is the term used to describe the four major types of leukemia: acute lymphocytic (ALL) or myeloid (AML) leukemia and chronic lymphocytic (CLL) or myeloid (CML) leukemia. The terms lymphocytic & myeloid denote the types of cells involved. In general, leukemia is characterized by the uncontrolled accumulation of blood cells. However, the natural history of each type & the therapies used to treat people with each type are different.

ALL and AML are diseases that progress rapidly without treatment. They result in accumulation of immature, nonfunctional cells in the marrow &

blood. The marrow often stops producing enough normal red & white blood cells.

- Leukemia is the most common cancer in children under 20.
- The most common type of leukemia in children is ALL.
- Most cases of leukemia occur in older adults & the median age is 66 years.
- This year, leukemia is expected to strike 10 times as many adults as children.
- The most common types of leukemia in adults are AML and CLL.
- An est. 43,050 new cases of leukemia will be diagnosed in the US this year.
- An estimated 259,889 people in the US are currently living with leukemia.