

Spotlight On Health



One Family's Incredible Journey To Wellness

(NAPSA)—Standing up to cancer can be one of the toughest challenges anyone has to face—but as one Portland family discovered, it can also be rewarding.

At age 3 months, Greta was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia. The prognosis was not good, and Greta's parents—Maggie and Andy—had to adjust to her being in the hospital, watching her go through a blood transfusion and chemotherapy. Greta later required a bone marrow transplant, which she got—courtesy of her 2-year-old sister, Charlotte.

While the transplant was a success, it led to complications, including one that can lead to organ failure and is often fatal. Greta was placed in a medically induced coma while doctors waited for signs of improvement. Eventually, Greta was well enough to be discharged from the hospital, though she still had to be hooked up to machines at night.

Three months later, Greta relapsed. Maggie and Andy faced a number of unpleasant options for their infant daughter. Through an online community, Maggie heard about a Stand Up To Cancer—St. Baldrick's Pediatric Cancer Dream Team clinical trial at Seattle Children's Hospital that was accepting babies. This was one of the 25 clinical trials conducted under this Dream Team.

The study involved collecting and growing Greta's T cells, then reintroducing them into her bloodstream. However, at that point, Greta's condition was so poor that a "bridge" therapy was required to keep her alive long enough to do the cell collection.

Greta finally had the T cell infusion in August 2014. Initially she developed a serious staph infection that had to be treated. However, when Greta developed an extremely high fever, the doctors and nurses said it was a good sign: the T cells were fighting the cancer. After another week, Greta was ready to go home.

Everything had changed; Greta had become a playful, energetic toddler, and her immune system was so strong, she was even able to go to a petting zoo. Together Maggie, Andy, Greta, and Charlotte (and baby brother Dietrich born in December 2014)—got through the harrowing experience.

"It's really hard to put into words, how your child's cancer has changed your lives," says Maggie. "Things that come up aren't a big deal anymore. Cancer's a big deal."



For Greta, the battle against cancer was long and hard, but her family's love and determination helped her through.

Four years after her successful treatment, Greta started kindergarten. Her own natural immunity is beginning to redevelop, and those engineered T cells have begun to recede and her normal "B cells" are coming back. She still gets a medical follow-up every few months, as well as an annual post-cancer follow-up, and an endocrinologist is monitoring her growth, but Greta remains on a healthy path, the family "spitfire," who loves horse riding and violin lessons, drawing and learning to read and write and summers at Maggie's parent's farm.

Thanks to their courage and perseverance, along with incredible support from family, friends and the medical community, this story has a happy ending.

Stand Up To Cancer works relentlessly to offer the newest, most effective and most promising cancer treatments to patients quickly by bringing together the best minds to collaborate on innovative cancer research.

From October 28 through November 17, CVS Health is conducting an in-store fundraising campaign at CVS Pharmacy locations nationwide where customers can support Stand Up To Cancer's innovative research by donating \$1, \$3 or more at the register or online at www.StandUpToCancer.org/CVSHealth. Every donation makes a difference, helping to bring new, effective treatments to patients like Greta, faster.