

Jocelyn Rose Dunahugh      Born 11/27/07

September 13, 2009 Jocelyn was a happy, normal 21 month old little girl. On that Sunday she was at her mommy's family reunion having a good time playing with her many cousins. The next evening she began to vomit. This continued into the next day. Her mother was able to get her an appointment with her doctor Wednesday September 16, 2009. She was admitted to the Washington County Hospital with bilateral pneumonia. During the X-ray it was discovered Jocelyn had an enlarged heart. Thursday September 17 (her mommy's birthday) an echocardiogram was performed with a doctor from Washington Children's Hospital on a conference video call, this confirmed she had an enlarged heart, she was diagnosed with Myocarditis. A virus had settled in her heart and caused it to become enlarged. Her heartbeat was 150 the whole time she was at Washington County Hospital. It was determined she needed to get to the Children's National Medical Center in Washington DC as soon as possible. Arrangements were made to fly her down there, however the weather would not allow the helicopter to fly and she was transported by ambulance. Jocelyn was limp and had difficulty breathing. She was no longer the happy healthy little girl she was at her mommy's family reunion a few days earlier.

Friday, September 18, around 3:00 am Jocelyn was placed on a respirator due to the difficulty she had breathing on her own and to take the stress off her heart. Later that afternoon she was taken to the Cardiac Cath Lab to get biopsy samples from her heart. Upon removing the catheter after the procedure Jocelyn went into cardiac arrest. Dr. Canter performed CPR for seven minutes before her heart started beating again. They had to immediately place her on an ECMO machine (life support for her heart and lungs where her blood is taken from her little body, ran through the machine that took out the carbon dioxide and put in oxygen, the blood ran back through her heart). After this was done the doctor spoke with her mommy and daddy and explained if they were unable to reduce the size of her heart she may have to have a heart transplant. This would be a last resort if they could not reduce the size with time and medication.

For the next week her family continued to wait, with her parents by her side the entire time while she was on life support in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at Children's Hospital in Washington DC, giving her all the time she needed to heal her little heart. She was paralyzed in an induced coma so she couldn't feel the pain. During this time it was also found she had fluid around her heart and lungs and tubes had to be inserted to remove the fluid.

Finally on September 23 they took her off the ECMO machine. They did numerous tests the previous day to make sure she could handle it. She started to awake from her coma around 8:00 pm and when she saw her mommy and daddy she wanted kisses, she was smacking her lips. She was still on the respirator with the tube down her throat so she couldn't talk yet. The left ventricle of her heart was not pumping and squeezing as it should and the left bottom portion of her lung had collapsed.

On September 25 they finally took Jocelyn off the respirator so she could breathe on her own. They continued to try to inflate the bottom portion of her left lung. She was still in a lot of pain, but she was coping. She was being so brave; her little body had been through so much. The next day they found Jocelyn was suffering from withdrawals from the lack of morphine she was given while on the ECMO machine and that was causing her a lot of pain and discomfort. On September 27 they started to give her methadone to

help with the morphine withdrawal. She was also placed on a clear liquid diet where she could take Jell-O, juices and broth my mouth. They placed a feeding tube town her throat and continued giving her fluids through an IV to ensure she was getting the proper nutrition she needed. On September 29 they removed the feeding tube and placed her on a solid food diet. Her appetite wasn't very good but she began talking more. At this time they also diagnosed her with Parvo Virus, which caused a rash under her left armpit. This was found through a blood test.

September 30 they began physical therapy and she was able to sit in a recliner with the assistance of pillows. This was especially difficult because she had so many wires and tubes still in her body.

On October 1 she was moved from CICU and placed in a room in the Heart and Kidney Unit. She still suffers from an enlarged heart and the left ventricle is slightly improving.

October 2-4 Jocelyn is steadily getting back to her precious little self. She is talking more. She can set up by herself for short periods of time and she can take 2 steps by herself but can't walk alone like she did before she got sick. Her appetite is not back to normal yet; her mom has to constantly try to get her to eat. On October 5 she has another ECHO scheduled, along with blood work and a neurological exam/consult to ensure there was no damage to her brain while she was on the ECMO machine. She continues with her physical therapy. If all goes well she may be released this evening. Jocelyn will still need constant care once she gets home and will have to return to the Children's Hospital at least every two weeks for further testing to see if her heart size has reduced. She will have to take numerous medications to ensure her well being. She has been through a lot in the past 3 weeks and she still has a long road ahead of her but she is alive, thanks to the staff at the Children's Hospital and the thoughts and prayers from many, many people. It is unknown at this time what damage the Myocarditis caused to her heart. They will only be able to determine that when and if the size of her heart reduces.

Jocelyn's mother, Kristin Johnson, works in the office of Always Communications in Hagerstown where she makes a little over nine dollars an hour. She has used all of her vacation to keep a bedside vigil with Jocelyn during these hard times. Kristin is now on family leave without pay. Jocelyn's daddy, Travis Dunahugh just started working at the Hard Times Café in Hagerstown as a cook. He makes nine dollars an hour. Travis had no vacation time and has been on family leave without pay for the past three weeks. He plans on going back to work this week to help with the expenses incurred and with future expenses. As you can see they were living paycheck to paycheck barely making ends meet before Jocelyn got sick.

Travis and Kristin do not live together so they each have the normal expenses of rent, food, heat, clothing, gas, and daycare not to mention the future expenses of Jocelyn's medical care (prescriptions) and cost of getting her to and from the Children's Hospital to get the tests and medical care she needs to get back to the beautiful healthy little girl she once was. Their family is helping as much as they can, but they will need more help to assure their daily survival and the future wellbeing of Jocelyn. This is why, as much as they hate to accept it, they need help.



Jocelyn Sept 13, 2009



Sept 18, 2009



Sept 25, 2009