

30 Days/30 Stories®

Jack

Diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia in February 2019 at the age of 13

Jack is a 13 year-old who attends Orefield Middle School in the Parkland School District. The week of February 25, 2019, Jack had fevers on and off the entire week. When the flu test came back negative from the hospital, we did a follow up visit with his pediatrician the next day, February 28th. We knew it must have been something more than just a normal winter sickness. The pediatrician confirmed that Jack was positive for strep throat (which was negative 3 days prior) but during the visit, Mom found little red dots on Jack's neck and brought it to the attention of the doctor, who decided to run a stat CBC (complete blood count). A blood test was done and within 3 hours, we were instructed to take Jack to the ER for a direct admission to the hospital. On February 28, 2019, Jack was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia B-cell. He, along with the rest of the family, was hit very hard with that news because his pop-pop , Frederick Williams Sr, died 6 months earlier from leukemia. Jack started chemo the next day.

After about 3 months of chemo, Jack was feeling well enough to start up homebound to keep him up with his schooling for 7th grade, which he finished at the end of June. He will start up online classes at the end of August until he can resume school with his friends in 8th grade. He will hopefully be able to go back to Orefield in January 2020.

Jack had three toxic reactions to a chemotherapy drug called methotrexate. The second one being the worst, where he couldn't speak, eat, or even sit up on his own. During that time, a friend of the ours, Corinna, happen to see Saquon Barkley at an event and told him about Jack's situation. Saquon and his family came that very night to see Jack in the hospital which really helped to lift his spirits. We cannot thank him and his family enough for taking the time to come visit our son, Jack.

Several of his friends have been visiting, coming along to see a movie, and playing Xbox with Jack so he doesn't feel so isolated. We, and Jack, have been so thankful for those buddies. Jack is a big lover of football and has played flag football and tackle football with the South Parkland Youth Association the last 8 years with the last 3 years playing NFL Flags in both the fall and spring. The one thing he really misses doing is playing football and he is still quite upset that he wasn't able to try out for the Orefield MS football team. He is a very big NFL fan and really likes the Cowboys. He is looking forward to our Sunday family football parties where we cheer on our favorite teams and eat. Jack's dream is to play High School Football, play football for the Michigan Wolverines, and perhaps one day make it to the NFL.

We all have been so thankful for the amazing support and encouragement from our family and friends. The care and compassion from the medical team at the LVHN Pediatric Infusion Center and 5th floor of the Reilly Children's Center is unsurpassed. We can't thank you enough.

Written by Jack's Mom and Dad

If you would like to donate in Jack's honor Click Here

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