

“My Child, My Story”

Christine’s Story

We can not begin to express in words our experience at Children’s Mercy Hospital. The emotions we felt can not be accurately described. In the simplest terms, we would say: we came in fear, we stayed and were comforted, we left grateful.

We were first welcomed to Children’s Mercy through the Emergency Department. Our 7-year-old daughter, Christine, had been ill with stomach pains, diarrhea and was now vomiting every thirty minutes. She was later diagnosed with Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome.

We were fearful. This condition was caused by toxins that resulted probably from E. coli or salmonella poisoning. The toxins, over a two week period in the hospital, damaged her kidneys, lungs, pancreas, liver, and heart. Her condition worsened daily for those two weeks. She was put on a ventilator because she quit breathing, put on dialysis because her kidneys shut down, had five plasma exchange treatments and four blood transfusions. The doctors were telling us that the next step would be life support.

It was terrifying and it shook our faith down to its roots, leaving us completely helpless with nothing to do but pray for our daughter and trust God and the doctors and nurses.

We were comforted from the time we arrived at Children’s Mercy. We always felt the doctors and nurses were doing everything they could to save our daughter, and she was receiving absolutely the best care possible. For many weeks she was closer to death than to life, and we felt like we were in constant battle 24 hours a day, along with the doctors and nurses, to keep her alive. One nurse was constantly busy her entire shift in ICU, working diligently to keep her alive, along with a doctor. I am grateful to both to this very day.

While the staff did give her outstanding care, they also took time to get to know us and made sure we were doing alright emotionally and physically. We were referred to the Ronald McDonald House where we tried to get a few hours of fitful sleep each day. The Ronald McDonald House was a fantastic place of support where as newcomers we could get much needed emotional support from other parents who had been going through similar battles for weeks and months. The Ronald McDonald House was an amazing oasis that provided us some relief during this difficult journey.

Our time at Children’s Mercy was an amazing and terrifying time as we sought answers from the doctors and from God as to why this was happening. As Christians, our faith in God helped us through this situation even though many of our questions still went unanswered. Christine’s illness did shake our faith down to its roots, but we came through this as stronger Christians and a closer family in part due to the help of the staff of Children’s Mercy Hospital. Yes, we left very grateful, and we remain so today.

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