

CELEBRATION OF WELLNESS

NEWS

Issue 67

August 2023

Pediatric Cancer Awareness: Felicity's Fight

Felicity, who turns six years old in September, has been a patient at Celebration Pediatrics since she was about nine months old. From the beginning, she (and her family) have been nothing but smiles, high-fives, and hugs when she arrives at the office, and like the superstar she is, everyone runs to stop in and say hi.



room visits, ten holidays and family birthdays inpatient, five pneumonia/respiratory admissions, two times complete hair loss, one walker, one wheelchair, and learned to how to walk again.

Felicity underwent 886 days of chemo and treatment for her illness. Finally, after a long struggle, with many hills and valleys, she could ring her bell in May 2023 — declaring VICTORY over her cancer!

"When I met Felicity as an infant, it was easy to see that she was special. Many children with Down Syndrome are easy to bond with, but

During the height of the pandemic in December 2020, Felicity fell catastrophically ill, and days from impending death, she was diagnosed with high-risk acute lymphoblastic leukemia. With the help of her family, Felicity began her fight headfirst. Within her 2.5-year battle, she began building her "beads of courage" that grew over 24 feet long! One bead for every procedure, chemo, admission, overnight stay (over 225 nights), ER trips, blood & platelet transfusions, bone marrow biopsies, etc.

Throughout her journey, Felicity had 225 overnight/inpatient days, eight months of missed school (hospital/homebound), 30 transfusions of blood products, 25 radiology procedures (X-ray, MRI, CT, Fluoroscopy), 15 lumbar punctures with anesthesia, 15 emergency

Felicity had that extra sparkle. Watching her development progress from infancy to a feisty toddler was so rewarding for us and her family. She seemed so healthy. After so much progress, it seemed so unfair when she was diagnosed with leukemia. But seeing her in remission and hopefully cured after her long journey with this disease is gratifying. She still has her sparkle. We are grateful for all the clinicians and researchers who have made a previously fatal disease one that is now treatable and curable," says Dr. Robert Dabrow, MD, FAAP, Medical Director.

The Celebration Pediatrics family couldn't be more proud or happier to see such a big fight in this little warrior, and she prevailed in the end, but she did it without a shadow of a doubt. We love you, Felicity!

2023 Fallen Heroes Tattooathon: Saturday, August 12, 2023

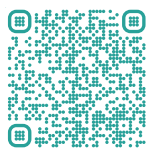
Join us for the 3rd Annual Fallen Heroes Tattooathon at 5887 W Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy, Kissimmee, FL 34746, from 10 am - 10 pm. All proceeds from this event will go to the M Family Foundation, a local non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness and supporting those affected by ovarian and pediatric cancers.



2023 Superhero Race Against Cancer: September 17, 2023

Put on your cape and join the fight for families battling ovarian and pediatric cancers. This year's event will be held from 7:30 am - 11:00 am in Downtown Celebration, Florida, at Lakeside Park.

Registration is now OPEN.



Back To School Physicals - Appointments Available!

Schedule your child's Back to School Physical / Sports Physical. Appointments tend to fill up quickly. Call us to schedule an appointment at (866) 595-5113.

MEET THE PROVIDERS AT CELEBRATION PEDIATRICS

Robert "Dr. Bob" Dabrow, MD, FAAP, Medical Director • Rayyan M. Anwer, MD, FAAP • Nina Cavalli, MD, FAAP
Michelle D. Toma, MD, FAAP • Zulma Zorrilla-Pabon, MD • Monica Clark, APRN, MSN, FNP-BC
Connie Ortiz, MSN, APRN, FNP-C • Candice Wilson, DNP, APRN, FNP-C

CELEBRATION: 1530 Celebration Boulevard • 301 • Celebration, FL 34747

WINTER GARDEN: 1997 Daniels Rd • Winter Garden, FL 34787

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Ovarian Cancer Awareness: Connie's Courage



By Connie Schmidt

In 1980, my grandmother Betty Koerper was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at 57. They performed surgery to remove her uterus, ovaries, tubes, and cervix. After surgery, they informed my grandma that they removed all the cancer and nothing further was needed. In 1984, just four years later, her cancer returned with a vengeance. They believed the cancer had spread to her lymph nodes

which were undetectable during surgery. She underwent chemo and radiation for several years. However, it took a toll on her body, and she stopped treatment. She passed away in 1987 at the age of 64.

Knowing this history, my mom was told she only had a 5% chance of getting ovarian cancer. Knowing her family history, my mom kept up with all her gynecologic appointments. She went in for her annual exams like clockwork. Her results came back as normal at her last appointment in February 2015. By July 2015, she started experiencing some abdominal pain and discomfort. She went to the doctor in August 2015, where she was sent for a CT scan of the abdomen. There, they discovered a tumor in her ovaries just six months after her last OBGYN appointment.

She was sent to The James Cancer Center in Columbus, Ohio. She underwent surgery to have her uterus, ovaries, tubes, and cervix removed. Unlike my grandma, this time, they gave her chemo just four weeks after surgery. Watching her go through chemo and its toll on her body was hard. But here she is, eight years later, and a survivor. A warrior. She's one of the strongest women I know. Thanks to

technological advances, unlike in my grandma's case, my mom was able to have genetic testing done. She was negative for BRCA 1 and 2.

Knowing this history, I kept up with all my gynecologic appointments. I also went in for my yearly exams like clockwork. However, despite the negative genetic testing, I still didn't like what I saw in my family history. I wanted options, and I was given two. I could go in every six months for bloodwork to monitor my CA-125 levels and have an ultrasound, or I could have everything removed via DaVinci robotic surgery. Both options have their pros and cons. My mom's cancer formed six months after her last OBGYN appointment, so even if I went in every six months, it could still form between appointments. Getting the DaVinci robotic surgery would push me into early menopause before my body was ready. After discussing both options with my healthcare provider and going back and forth, I decided to have the DaVinci robotic surgery.

May 1st, 2023, is when I went in for surgery at 41. I woke up from recovery knowing I made the best health decision possible. I know I will not have to endure what my grandma and mom went through. I know I won't have to worry about ovarian cancer any longer. I also know that someday my daughter will face the same decision that I found myself making – a decision only she can make based on our family history and what is best for her.

September is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Ladies, keep up on your annual women's wellness exams and don't ignore any abnormal signs or symptoms. And always remember to help spread awareness about this disease; it could save lives.



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MEET THE PROVIDERS AT CELEBRATION OBGYN

David A. Marcantel, MD, FACOG • Michele Johnson, MD, FACOG • Yamines Alifonso-Amador, MD, FACOG
Norris M. Allen, MD, FACOG • John Kim, MD, FACOG • Denise L. Klemczak, DO, FACOG • Robert F. Lemert, MD, FACOG
Adriana Luciano, MD, FACOG • Charlene Okomski, DO, FACOG • Jordana Reina, MD, FACOG
Dawn Ammirata, APRN • Victoria E. Richione, APRN, FNP-C • Valentina Acosta-Moreno, MS, PA-C
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