



Haiden Wiggins

Haiden Wiggins is a precocious, happy, four-year-old from Wyoming who is a constant delight to everyone who knows her; but, not long ago, this rambunctious little girl was in a hospital bed fighting for her life.

When she was two years old, Haiden's symptoms began to present themselves very subtly, starting as a slight change in her walking pattern. The increasing pain that she experienced in her pelvic area and hip caused her to awake often in the middle of the night, complaining that her "diapie" needed changing. As the Wiggins family continued to seek medical attention from several area doctors, Haiden's condition worsened. Doctors speculated everything from juvenile arthritis to a bone infection in her hip. As the pain increased, Haiden began to lose her appetite and develop a limp. Haiden was finally referred to The Children's Hospital for specialty care in November 2004.

The Wiggins family was celebrating the new arrival of Haiden's brother, Caleb, when their world was turned upside down. On Thanksgiving Day Haiden's parents, Doug and Heather, received the heartbreaking news that their two-year-old had a very rare form of bone cancer, Ewing's Sarcoma. The tumor was embedded in her spine, growing out from the vertebrae into the surrounding tissue.

Haiden's case was very advanced, and complete removal of the tumor posed harm to major blood vessels, nerves and vertebrae. The specialists at Children's decided the best course for Haiden was to start a 10-month regimen of chemotherapy and radiation.

The Wiggins family became "regulars" at The Children's Hospital, visiting for chemotherapy treatments two to three times a month for three or more days at a time.

"There were no hospitals or doctors in the entire state of Wyoming that could have provided our daughter with the level of cancer treatment and family-centered care that The Children's Hospital provided," says Heather Wiggins. "The nurses, child life therapists and caregivers at Children's are truly incredible and made such a daily impact on our lives. We would travel the world to save our child, so we were more than willing to travel a few hours to Children's! We are very lucky to have this type of resource in our region."

Haiden's resilient spirit carried her through a host of blood transfusions, chemotherapy and radiation treatments. "It was Haiden's willpower, determination and feisty attitude that kept all of our spirits up," says Heather.

Today Haiden is cancer free. She visits The Children's Hospital for routine check-ups, leaving plenty of time for her favorite activities: playing with her dolls, dancing, swinging on her swing set, spending time with her grandparents and just being four.

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*- Heather Wiggins,
Haiden's mother*

