

## Amy's Story

Amy, our spunky and active 7 year old daughter, had been complaining of stomach pains for awhile, and we had thought that she possibly had food allergies. Her appetite had become minimal, and she was starting not to feel well in general. We brought her to the pediatrician several times and then ended up at a Gastrointestinal Specialist. She went from an x-ray, to an ultrasound, to a CAT scan in one day. After the imaging, they found that she had a mass the size of a Kleenex box in her small abdomen.

On February 26th 2009 our little daughter was officially diagnosed with a malignant abdominal tumor following exploratory surgery. Initially, they could not confirm what kind of tumor it was, and they had to send the biopsies away to be evaluated. They told us it was a “nasty” tumor, and they started very aggressive chemotherapy on March 4th. She ended up staying in the hospital for over a month. The tumor was disintegrating so fast because of the chemo, it caused a bowel obstruction. The tumor had been adhered to the intestine, and as it was shrinking, it pulled the intestine into a 90 degree angle and caused the bowel obstruction. She had surgery to correct this, and it took awhile for her to start eating. She also had intermittent hospital stays for various reasons, but she always had a positive attitude, and usually a smile on her face!

They did determine that the huge mass was a Wilm's tumor, which is in the kidney. Usually this tumor will grow into the kidney, but, Amy's tumor grew out from the kidney, and this is very unusual. She has had many ups and downs with the effect of chemo and her body recovering from such a large tumor. The tumor and her kidney were removed May 24th, and she had 6 days of radiation therapy after the removal. Her last day of chemo was September 14, 2009. We are beyond grateful for her recovery, and for the research that has gone on for decades prior to Amy's Wilm's tumor. Without it, there would not be the expertise needed to treat her and allow her to have a complete recovery.

Amy continues to have a quarterly MRI and CT Scan to make sure that she is “clean” of any cancer. She had her first in February, and received a clean status, and her next one was November 10, 2011 and she is still CLEAN! Amy's oncologist, Dr. Julie Zimbelman, never says Amy is cured of her cancer but forever in remission.