

Mayo Clinic Medical Edge

Title: Jude’s Story: A Toddlers Battle with ITP / Date September 2014

Intro: Being a parent of a very sick child is a frightening experience. That’s particularly true when the illness is a mystery and each possibility seems more serious than the last. But, getting to the right diagnosis quickly is the first step toward recovery. Here’s Dennis Douda.

Video

Audio

///Video - Jude playing in yard	///Video - Jude playing
Sky Smith speaking	“Oh, Jude is just so fun. He’s very active, very playful, just silly as can be.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Jude Smith has all the rambunctious energy a 3-year-old toddler should have.
Sam Smith speaking	“He loves trying new things. He loves getting active, getting outside.”
Dennis Douda speaking	But a year ago his typical playfulness raised some frightening red flags for his parents, Sky and Sam Smith.
C.G. Sky Smith, Jude’s Mother	“And we noticed a lot of bruises. They were in strange places, like on his stomach, all over his face.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Jude developed uncontrollable nosebleeds and red, rash-like outbreaks on his skin, called petechiae. Initially medical tests were inconclusive.
Sam Smith speaking C.G. Sam Smith, Jude’s Father	“Oh, it was terrifying. It was terrifying. I mean, it was very upsetting. It could be anything from leukemia to lymphoma to, we don’t know what else.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Clues began to emerge from a closer look at Jude’s blood.
Sky Smith speaking	“A normal platelet count is 150,000 to 400,000, and his platelets were only 10,000.
C.G. Dr. Behzad Bidadi, Pediatric Hematology Oncology	“They have low platelets and this increases their risk for bleeding because the job of the platelets is to stop bleeding.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Meaning a bump to the head and bleeding in the brain could be devastating. Pediatric Hematology specialist Behzad Bidadi says figuring out what was making Jude sick was really a matter of eliminating all the other possibilities, including certain cancers. What was left was an autoimmune disorder - called ITP.

Dr. Behzad Bidadi speaking	“We don’t exactly know what causes ITP, also known as immune thrombocytopenic purpura. We believe that the immune system in the body mistakes the platelets for being foreign and attacks them.”
Dennis Douda speaking C.G. Mayo Clinic, November 2013	Under a microscope it’s easy to see just how drastically ITP reduces platelets in the blood. To try to reverse the damage, doctors gave Jude multiple rounds of intravenous immunoglobulins to suppress his over-active immune system. When that ceased to be effective after a few months, they tried heavy doses of corticosteroids, then another immunotherapy drug made of antibodies; all proven treatments that work for the majority of patients.
Dr. Behzad Bidadi speaking	“More than 80 percent of children diagnosed with ITP, have, the ITP actually resolves within a year and the patient’s platelets counts go back to normal.”
/// Video – Make-a-Wish trip	/// NATS Make-a-Wish trip
Dennis Douda speaking	That was not the case for Jude, unfortunately. His ITP proved to be a chronic refractory variety, that would not stay in remission. The outlook became so uncertain, Jude was given a once in a lifetime trip, the kind often reserved for children who may not get another chance.
Sam Smith speaking	“ It was a very emotional experience.”
Sky Smith speaking	“Right, on one hand, it was so exciting. We have this incredible gift and then on the other, it was like I can’t believe that my kid is going on a Make-A-Wish trip.”
Sam Smith speaking	“His wish was to go to Disney World to meet Lightning McQueen. He’s a huge fan of Cars and he’s got this whole thing where when he would go to the hospital, every time he would go he would watch Cars on demand.” “And he just ran right up to Lightning McQueen and gave him a big kiss, like, on the quarter panel.”
Dennis Douda speaking	Meanwhile, Jude’s team of providers was planning its next approach for managing his ITP.
Sky Smith speaking	“The detective work has been incredible. I feel like we joke that his doctor’s staying up late, researching things just for Jude.
/// SOT @ 41:31 trt :06 Dr. Behzad Bidadi speaking	”It’s not just a destruction of the platelets by the immune system, but there also

	could be a problem with platelet production.”
Dennis Douda speaking	So, once a week, Jude gets an injection of Romiplostim, which basically stimulates the bone marrow to produce more platelets.
Sam Smith speaking	“It’s been tried and tested in adults, but it’s experimental and not FDA approved for children.”
///Video Jude playing	///Video Jude playing
Dennis Douda speaking	So far, it’s working very well. Jude’s platelets counts are nearly normal. So Sam and Sky can relax, well, at least as much as any parents with a rambunctious toddler.
Sky Smith speaking	“Jude’s resilience has really carried us all through this.”
((CLOSING 150th Animation))	((CLOSING 150th Animation))

Anchor tag: By the way, Jude’s father, Sam, is a Mayo Clinic employee. If Jude’s condition hasn’t resolved itself by age 5, doctors will consider removing his spleen to preserve more platelets. That’s effective about 60% of the time for patients with ITP, but it can’t be done until a child is older because of the spleen’s value for fighting childhood infections. Each year about 30,000 Americans are diagnosed with ITP.

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