

Adalyn Schmit as told by her mom Sarah

Addie story started on February 28, 2021 when she woke up throwing up. I thought to myself "oh my gosh, I brought the stomach bug home". I am an RN in a nursing home, and we had the stomach bug going through. That day she only threw up once and laid around all day. Over the next two weeks she would throw up on and off and she would go to pre-school on and off. On March 8th at 3:30pm I got a call from the school that Addie was running a fever and not feeling well. So, to the school I go and I take her to Acute care as our primary could not fit her in that day. Acute care tested her for strep and Covid and both come back negative. They told me it is a virus and to just treat her at home. Over the next week she went to school on and off. She slept a lot and was not eating. Her 5th birthday was March 12th she was feeling ok but tired. We got through the weekend, then March 15th there was snow day, so the kids stayed home while I went to work. When I got home, she was sleeping at the bottom of the basement steps. The next day, she woke up gagging again and my husband told me to make an appointment with our primary, we got her in the next day at 9am. I went to work as I needed to get something done, but we were texting back and forth, so I knew they were doing some lab work and x-rays. I kept looking for the lab work to come back and it never came through on MyChart. I was on the phone for work trying to get something figured out and my husband called. I picked up the phone to tell him I couldn't talk and instead I hear "Sarah this is the Dr, stop what you are doing and walk away." I hung up the work phone and ran out of my office. She started talking about the lab work and how she has been sick for so long. She says her hemoglobin is 6 and I remember going "6". She asks me I know about labs as I replied, "I am a nurse". She goes on to tell me that they are going to call Sioux Falls. By this time somehow, I made it into my boss's office and shut the door, while I was crying my eyes out. I left work and drove home with my head spinning and trying to text and call people and think of what I need to pack in hospital bags for all three of us.

My husband called again to tell me that the insurance wanted Addie to go to Avera Queen of Peace first, before going to Sioux Falls. I am on the phone with insurance crying my eyes out. They say if it is an emergency go to the hospital. I got our bag and what I thought we would need, (which was so wrong!) and went to the clinic. The doctor came to her room to say the ER was ready, and we could drive her over there. We got there about noon, and they started an IV and more lab draws. They also did a dose of antibiotics and fluids. At this point it was like 4:30 in the afternoon, and the ambulance was finally on-site to take Addie to the Castle. I rode along in the ambulance and my husband followed behind. We met with Oncology when we got to the hospital around 6:30pm and Addie had more lab work. She did end up having platelets and a blood transfusion that night. My husband went back home to be with Addie's brothers and came back up the next day. Addie had woken up around 7am on March 17th throwing up. The Oncology team came into our room around 10:30am, and breaks the news to us that Addie has ALL. I really don't remember a lot of that conversation. I do remember they already had a plan in place. Addie was going to surgery at 1pm, which when the nurse came in previously, she had kind of spilled the beans on that when she said Addie was NPO - nothing to eat or drink. Addie had surgery to place port-a-cath, bone marrow biopsy, and lumbar puncture with chemo. This was the start of our journey. The first hospital stay was for 9 days. Addie's final diagnosis was B-cell ALL with Philadelphia like genetics. Addie has been in the hospital now 8 different times. She has done two rounds of 28 days of continuous IV immunotherapy. She is now in what they call long term maintenance, which means we take

chemotherapy daily at home. We are still fighting, and this is a journey no parent of a child or child should have to go through. So, I will keep fighting for her and all children who have to go through cancer.