

Emma Ivie

4 years old

DIAGNOSIS:

Emma was found to suffer from neuroblastoma in June 2008.

EMMA'S STORY:

Emma loved to ride her bike and play with her little sister Abby. But in spring 2008, she stopped wanting to ride her bike or play. At first, her doctor thought she had a virus. But then her parents noticed that Emma's eyelids turned yellow and black shadows appeared under her eyes. Soon, Emma stopped walking because it hurt. With growing alarm, her parents took her to the local children's hospital, where doctors did blood work. When the results came in, Emma was sent immediately to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.



AT ST. JUDE:

Doctors at St. Jude ran more tests. The results were devastating: little Emma suffered from neuroblastoma, a common solid tumor of childhood. Her parents were in shock. "I didn't even know what it was. I had never heard of neuroblastoma before," her mother said.

Emma's parents, however, found comfort and help at St. Jude. Emma's father was attending optometry school, so the family was living on a student budget and had two small children to care for. But St. Jude is the only pediatric cancer research center where families never pay for treatment not covered by insurance. With the burden of medical bills lifted off them, Emma's parents could focus on taking care of their daughter.

Emma has received chemotherapy, a bone marrow transplant, and radiation. She also underwent surgery to remove tumors on her adrenal glands.

Emma loves princesses and playing dress up with Abby. "St. Jude is a special place," said her mother. "The people who work at St. Jude were called here."