

CHILDREN'S HEROES

NEWS AND STORIES *about YOUR IMPACT on our kids!*



You Help Olianna Get Back on Track

**Your generosity
helps our doctors
give children the
very best care!**

When Olianna's mom, Laura, was pregnant, doctors suspected that her daughter would be born with esophageal atresia, a rare congenital condition in which part of her esophagus does not develop properly.

Unfortunately, when Olianna came into the world, she had that and other physical issues that would require realignment.

So, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh doctors went to work immediately, performing several reconstructive surgeries that would help get Olianna back on track as quickly as possible.

"She's been through six or seven procedures in her first six months of life," says her mom, Laura. "It's

always emotional, but she's pulled through so much. I had never heard of esophageal atresia until we had Olianna. But for anyone going through this, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. It's very dark at times, but there is a light."

**Your support helps make
Olianna's road home just
a little bit easier.**

Your donations help make that light shine for families at UPMC Children's. **And thanks to your support and the expert care she received here, Olianna recovered from her surgeries and went home with her family.**

**INSIDE
THIS ISSUE**

See how your gifts
provide exceptional care.





Krisha is undergoing treatment for a very rare blood disorder. Your support helps give her hope.

"One in a Million"

Your contributions help Krisha battle a rare disorder.

Krisha was only 2 months old when she began hyperventilating. She became very sick. So, her parents, Brianna and Sachin, brought her to UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

After testing, it was determined that Krisha had a bone marrow disorder known as Diamond-Blackfan Anemia (DBA). With this condition, the bone marrow malfunctions and fails to make enough red blood cells.

As a result, children with DBA have an increased risk of several serious complications, including an increased risk of developing bone marrow cancer and other cancers.

“Luckily, one of the doctors knew what it was,” says Brianna. “It’s a rare disorder — like one in a million.”

Krisha, who’s now 2 years old, has participated in a steroid trial and is currently receiving transfusions. Her family remains optimistic about her future.

Brianna says, “Krisha’s medical team found a bone marrow match and she will have a transplant this year.”

Thanks to generous supporters like you, Krisha can get the expert care she needs to battle her illness — and remain hopeful for a healthy future.

Planning for Tomorrow Challenge: Give Now. Give Later.

When you include UPMC Children’s Hospital Foundation in your will or estate plan, you help impact the lives of future generations. An immediate 10% cash match will be triggered in your name to one of our four Legacy Challenge funds (up to \$100,000) for donors who document new or increased planned gift commitments. Your generosity and thoughtful planning puts you at the heart of children’s care — not just today, but for generations to come. Our Gift Planning Team is here to assist you.

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chplegacy.org/challenge





Blaise's seizures changed his life. You made sure there was a plan that gave him a bright future.

Thanks to You, Blaise Has Hope

Your donations are at the heart of this teen's care.

Even though Blaise is only a teenager, his life has changed quite a bit.

The carefree days he knew as a child are like a distant memory. He can no longer do everything he used to without a reaction plan in place. But he has learned to adjust and adapt to his new reality — a life with epilepsy and seizures.

It all began when he and a friend were playing video games.

You helped Blaise find relief from seizures.

“My eyes started to drift,” Blaise says. “My friend thought I fell asleep, which was a fair assumption because nothing like that had ever happened to me. But I couldn't put words together correctly when I snapped out of it.”

It became clear that something was wrong — a frightening moment that created concern for Blaise and his family.

Several months later, it happened again, but in a different setting.

Blaise had a close friend whose parent died. The event caused a great deal of distress, and once again, Blaise had a seizure. After an ambulance ride, ER doctors felt this episode was due to trauma. But Blaise's family felt something more was happening to him, so they took control of his health. They brought him to UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Blaise was diagnosed with tonic-clonic seizures, which cause a loss of consciousness and violent muscle contractions.

“At UPMC Children's, you know you're safe,” says Blaise's mom, Janet. “You know you'll get everything situated and cared for and walk away with a plan.”

And thanks to the generous support from friends like you, that's exactly what they did.

Blaise may eventually outgrow his condition. It's an unknown he'll have to live with for now. But his current strategy includes hospital visits for testing and medication that have helped him manage his seizures since his first visit.

“I feel very confident when he's here that he's getting the best care possible,” Janet adds. “Plus, every interaction we've had has been over and above since we first walked in.”



Kevin Mollen, MD, Named Surgeon-in-Chief

It is our pleasure to announce that Dr. Kevin Mollen has assumed the position of Surgeon-in-Chief of UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Mollen was previously an Associate Professor of Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh, and the Associate Surgeon-in-Chief and Program Director of the Pediatric Surgery Fellowship at UPMC Children's.

Over the past 12 years, Dr. Mollen has distinguished himself as an outstanding surgeon and clinical leader. In addition to the roles above, he has served on numerous Children's Hospital Committees including Perioperative Steering, Safety, Robotics Surgery Oversight, Emergency Preparedness, and the Clinical Competency Committee.

Dr. Mollen is also a highly regarded scientist and has carried NIH funding for over a decade for his work in inflammatory bowel disease in children.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Mollen as the new Surgeon-in-Chief at UPMC Children's.

Breakthroughs in Research:

Your Support Helps Fuel Genetic Research That Will Protect Vulnerable Infants

A baby will encounter billions of germs during the first weeks of life, yet only a select few cause serious infections. The question many researchers ask is "why?"

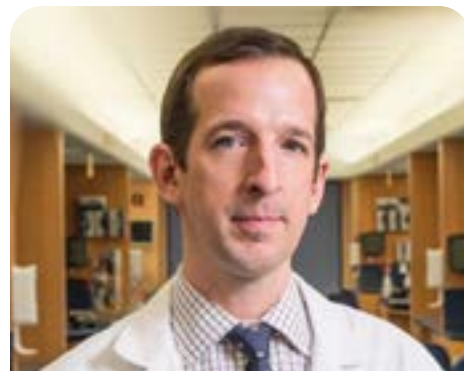
Exploration is vital to improving outcomes for babies in the NICU at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Under the leadership of Dr. Thomas Hooven, researchers in the Hooven Lab focus on understanding the molecular basis of serious bacterial infections in newborn babies, particularly preemies.

The research team is learning more about these bacterial infections daily to identify ways that protect vulnerable infants in the NICU better.

Two key areas the team is currently studying include:

- 1. Group B Streptococcus (GBS)**, the dominant cause of severe bacterial disease in newborns worldwide.
- 2. Necrotizing enterocolitis**, a severe gastrointestinal ailment among preterm babies.



Your donations help fuel Dr. Hooven's team in research of new treatments.

The lab uses innovative models of neonatal infection designed to replicate the ways bacterial infections can manifest in the NICU. This includes some of the most common scenarios that lead to infection.

The Hooven Lab's genetic research could potentially lead to a vaccination approach that prevents GBS disease. And it's all fueled by your support.

Your generosity helps us achieve the care, treatment, research, cures, and healthy future that every child deserves.

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Please accept my gift of \$_____ to provide lifesaving care for critically ill and injured children.

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Please contact me about naming UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation in my will, trust, or long-term financial plans.

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