

No limits

Nothing stopped these girls from **chasing their dreams**. Get ready to be **seriously inspired!**

JENNA JONES

Diving in

Jenna Jones has been slowly losing her sight since she was five years old. It's been caused by a retinal disease called cone-rod dystrophy. Now 16, Jenna has proved that it won't stop her – she competed in swimming at the 2016 Rio Paralympics and she's now getting ready to take part in the next games, in Tokyo in 2020!

When did you notice your sight was deteriorating?

I remember in preschool when everyone would sit down and watch TV, I'd always think it was boring because I'd be like, "Why would anyone want to watch this? You can't even see what's happening on there."

You're the only one in your family with the condition. How do you cope with that?

Last year, the Children's Medical Research Institute discovered that my condition was caused by genetic mutation. I was really excited because I have five siblings, so I was always like, "Why am I the only one with this problem?" It is like having an extra piece of the puzzle. Now I know this is just the card I've been dealt. It's helped me to understand more about myself.



What's your favourite memory from Rio?

Honestly, just the overall experience – the teams, the atmosphere and the grandstands, meeting new people, meeting people that I'd only seen on world rankings, racing against them, making finals – just everything.

But you had a setback when you returned home from Rio...

While I was in Rio, I started to get a sore knee. When I got back home it started to get really painful and I couldn't even kick, so I went for an ultrasound and they found a benign tumour that had gone through to the muscles. I had to have surgery and it set me back a bit, but now I'm back in the pool.

What does your daily routine look like?

I usually get up at 3.50am and I'm in the water training by 5am. I'll finish around 7am and then I go to TAFE from 9.30am to 3pm, as I'm studying massage therapy. Then I go back to training from 4pm to 6.30pm.

What does the future hold?

I really want to keep swimming for as long as possible because I love it! I also want to do sports massage and work with athletes.

Visit jeansforgenes.org.au to help more people like Jenna!