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ON October 14, 2016 our son Brody broke his arm playing in the backyard. After reviewing his X-ray the surgeon, on a hunch, passed the scans on to a colleague at The Children's Hospital in Westmead. Within a week Brody was diagnosed with [Ewing Sarcoma](#), a cancerous tumour that invades the bone and soft tissue. Before we knew it, he was in surgery.

Brody needed a bone biopsy, lumbar puncture, and a central line inserted into his chest. This would later be used to administer chemo, blood and platelet transfusions, of which he was about to have many. The central line is also used to give pain medications, cutting down of the trauma of countless needles.

During that first week we were approached by a woman who very eloquently asked if we would like to donate any of Brody's unused blood tissue and bone samples to help further research. We signed everything over that day.

No child should ever have to endure the sheer cruelty of this disease.

Cancer not only makes them incredibly ill but also robs them of a normal childhood, which is why funding and research is so important.



Each year more than 950 children and adolescents aged 0-19 years are diagnosed with cancer. Research is the only answer.

After three months of chemo Brody had a limb salvage surgery. Fortunately, the chemotherapy had shrunk the tumour from six centimetres down to one centimetre, but it had destroyed the top of the humerus, one of the main bones in the arm.

Two surgeons worked simultaneously to remove the damaged bone and took majority of the fibula from his leg and put it into his arm with the hopes it would grow into the shape of a new humerus. Eight hours of fusing and stapling blood vessels to keep the bone alive.

A phone call a few hours later from the surgeon to say he was confident they had removed all the tumour and no cancerous cells remained was the best phone call ever.

Three weeks later, sporting an arm cast and near-full leg cast, Brody began his final block of chemotherapy. This was six months of very heavy chemo doses to ensure any residual cells would be killed off.

Through our treatment we had a lot of hospital stays due to countless transfusions, viruses and high temperatures sometimes reaching 42 degrees.

I remember having a family dinner one night and Brody bumped his head on the corner of the chair, something children do all the time, but due to really low blood counts he ended up in hospital for a week with petechial bruising.



Doctors told us if he had a fall he could bleed internally. An average platelet count is anything from 150,000 to 450,000. That day Brody's count was 2. It's hard to believe these drugs used to save our loved ones are also the very thing that nearly kills them.

During Brody's last few months of treatment he was fortunate to become involved with The Great Cycle Challenge. This is a cycling event where people all around Australia are sponsored to cycle kilometres for the month of October. The money raised goes to the scientists at Children's Medical Research Institute in Sydney to help find better treatments and hopefully one day a cure for childhood cancers. To families like ours, this research is valuable.

Treatments today are far less invasive than they were ten years ago but there is still so much room for improvement.

On October 27, 2017 Brody was officially cancer free.

He got to ring the bell in the oncology ward to commemorate his achievement. I still can't watch the video clip without crying.

2018 has been a big year of firsts for our family. Brody started school this year, played his first season of soccer and has just signed up for cricket. We return to Sydney later this month for scans, hoping to celebrate a year in remission. Cross your fingers for us.

We are now happily living a "new normal" life

Scans and tests every three months, ongoing specialists' appointments, physio and constant monitoring — but we wouldn't change a thing. An amazing family of doctors and nurses, teamed up with the latest research and technology saved our little man's life and for that we will be forever grateful.

As for Brody, well ... he kicked cancer's butt!

Find out more about [The Great Cycle Challenge](#) and how to get behind it throughout October at greatcyclechallenge.com.au

Link to story: <https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/we-thought-it-was-a-broken-arm-the-reality-was-so-much-worse/news-story/6f4b836e9f734ffdeb842cfb4be01659>