

Luna's Story

In April 2009 Luna Maria Plunkett then aged two and a half years old was found to have a brain tumour. It was removed, tested and found to be cancer. It had spread to the spine but the bone marrow was clear. With the tumour being at the base of the brain her motor skills, swallowing, talking and walking had been affected by the swelling from the surgery. Luna has had many surgeries, periods in hospital, treatments in hospital and at home. She is about to undergo her 6th chemotherapy treatment (November 2008). A St. Oliver Plunkett medal hangs on Luna's bed each time she is admitted to the Children's Hospital in Los Angeles.

She had an MRI test and it multiple tumors in her spinal canal. There were too many to operate. She was too young for radiation so intense rounds of chemotherapy lasting over a period of at least 5 months were the only option for her. Prior to her treatment Luna had stem cells harvested from own blood and these would be replaced once her treatment was complete.

By June her long dark hair had gone and replaced by a sort of blond baby hair. Luna was always smiling and so positive and happy that it belied the seriousness of her condition. Talks with the doctors brought the reality back about how sick she is.

Due to where the brain tumour was, Luna had to re-learn to talk and walk. It was amazing how fast some words came back. When she first got home, she had to be held when she tried to walk. Her legs just went everywhere. She began 3 days a week of 3 hour sessions at the hospital for therapy, one hour of speech, one hour of occupational therapy and one hour of physical.

At that time and due to the chemotherapy Luna had to stay away from anyone with a fever, cold and visitors so no infections spread to her. She couldn't go into stores, restaurants or other closed in places. This will continue to be the case until she finishes the chemotherapy and her blood counts return to normal. Often Mom, Dad, her Luna and her brother, Oliver made trips to the park to play. If there were too many people there then it was off to the school down the street as no one was usually there due to summer. Not being able to even come to visit her grandparents house at that time, really hit them hard. Despite her difficulties Luna continued to smile, laugh and play with her family. The medical people were pleased with her progress.

By the end of June, Luna still had the feeding tube in as she did not eat enough on her own. This is something they said will just take time. In the 1st month of chemotherapy one of the drugs is very strong and usually ends up giving sores in the mouth which burn when anything is tried to be eaten. This same drug will be given to her in the 3rd and 5th months. Sores will again happen and after they heal in about 1 to 2 weeks she again will start to slowly eat. There was a great improvement in the number and clarity of her words she spoke. She still needed help walking. She could do pretty good just holding on to one hand. The hard part was trying to keep up with her! When she went to the hospital the nurses were surprised to see how active she was. Luna was waving and saying hi to them. There was no doubt prayers were making a great difference in her.

Fourth of July, Luna went to see her Daddy's high school band start off a parade in the morning and she ate half a barbequed hot dog for lunch! By the end of the month MRI scans showed Luna's brain was clear but the bad news was there seemed to be some swelling and extra fluid in the brain. It was only three months since major brain surgery so doctors hoped that the swelling would reduce.

By August Luna was continuing to do well, happy, playful and always in good humour despite having difficulty eating and being ill due to her treatment. By the end of this month Luna's third treatment of chemotherapy was over. Thankfully she did not experience sores in her mouth like she did after the first treatment. It was now that Luna first managed to walk 4-5 steps without having to hold on to someone's hand. Her voice was getting lower, closer to that of before the brain surgery. It was at times like this that no thanks would be enough for Dr. Javahery (her brain surgeon) and Dr. Findlay (her cancer doctor). By early September she was walking normally and even managed to put her favourite 'ear hat' on herself!

By mid-September the doctors were very pleased with how she was handling the chemotherapy drugs. She was a little wobbly walking after the treatments but she has never lost her great spirits. Oliver took Luna's illness in amazing fashion. One time, friends visited and hadn't seen the feeding tube Luna's in Luna's nose before. Oliver was standing next to Luna and told them "don't worry about the tube in her nose, she needs it to eat."

Due to the position of her brain tumor, at the base of the brain, after surgery she could not talk, walk or eat. Her right arm and hand shook when she tried to use it. She had been improving little by little. After each chemotherapy treatment she had a little setback but recovers quickly. When she first started

talking it was in a very high pitched voice and one word at a time. About a month ago she just started taking steps on her own. She was very unsteady and had to be held up. Now she very seldom wants help to walk, almost running. Her speech in one week doubled with her speaking whole sentences. She could again tell you all her colors, she could count past 10 and put the correct shapes back into the puzzles.

Luna's Grandfather, Tom Plunkett II puts it this way - 'I used to think it would be great to see one of the Lord's miracles first hand instead of just reading or hearing about them. I really believe I have experienced many since last April and especially lately. I now know how blessed I have been all these years with my wife, my sons, their wives and our grandchildren and especially to have so many friends and people I have never met to pray for us and especially Luna. At first the doctors were not too positive on Luna's future and now they cannot believe how well she is doing. There is no doubt that the prayers for us and Luna are not only being heard but the Lord is smiling on her. Nothing else can explain her amazing turn around. On behalf of my family I thank all of you for the prayers and concerns for us and Luna.'

Luna's Dad, Tom Plunkett III, told me this 'On the night before her brain surgery, it should have been the most sleepless night in my life. My daughter was waiting for a surgery that could have serious side effects, or worse. But I prayed like never before. I put all my worries in God's hands like he tells us to. I asked for faith and strength so that when I looked my daughter in the eye, she KNEW like I did everything would be ok. I didn't want to fake it or lie to her.

In fact, I slept like a baby that night and woke up rested and at peace with what she was about to go through. My prayers had brought me peace. That allowed me to be strong for Luna and for her Mom. So amidst all the tears and worries, I was able to smile at my daughter because I KNEW it was going to be ok. Prayer worked for me. God lifted my burden. He took away my fear. Of course, we are only human but God allowed me to be a better father and husband on that very important day. I thank God for that. And I thank Him every day for Luna and Oliver. Must be the Plunkett in me...faith in the face of terrible odds. Steadfast to the end huh?

We KNOW prayer works. Having more people pray for Luna means the WORLD to us because we KNOW how important prayer is. Thanks so much for taking up Luna's name with all your prayers. It matters. It makes a difference. Thank you Thank you Thank you.'

Tom Plunkett II relates a story - 'There is a 5 year old girl in the room with Luna. She has been going thru chemotherapy and radiation treatments for the past year. Her cancer is in the brain, knees and stomach. She had a full body scan and there was NO DETECTABLE CANCER FOUND. I know when people are asked to pray it is usually because things are not going well. We sometimes hear stories of people getting better but we were all so excited for this little girl when the doctors told her and her Mom. I had to let people know about this little girl, Madison. When people use to ask me if I thought prayer really works, I would say I believe so. Now the answer is ABSOLUTELY!!! Seeing the improvement in Luna everyday is all anyone would need to see.

By the end of October, the 5th round of chemotherapy treatment was complete and the swelling in the brain that they were concerned about had gone. A quick lab test showed Luna had C Diff infection. Her immune system was near zero, this is what happens after each chemotherapy treatment, and any little thing hits her hard. She was in great spirits usually happy and laughing and playing. The doctors keep saying they are amazed at how well she is doing. Maybe they should consider who is helping her and them.

Luna had a rough week at the start of November with low blood count, c-diff infection and she got a virus as well. With her low blood counts after the chemotherapy treatments she easily picks up viruses and fevers but bounces back very well. The doctors said he condition was very serious on this occasion. Two days later and back she came! She was eating biscuits, sipping juice, her color was back and blood count on the rise.

Nobody could be convinced that this is just medicine. Tom Plunkett II's heartfelt comment - 'I used to wonder if people praying for someone really made a difference or not. I have seen first hand things that doctors cannot really understand why they happened. This is Luna's amazing progress from the surgery of the brain tumor, her GREAT spirits thru the chemotherapy treatments and bouncing back from these side effects. Also with little Madison now being cancer free after so long. In the past when someone told me of an ill relative or friend I would say 'I'll pray for them' but many times I forgot shortly after.' (how often have we all done that? - John F). Now every prayer includes 'and all those affected by these horrible diseases.' The sad part is that

it has taken me 60 years to really know why things happen. If the Lord himself is not with her, than he sent a special angel to be with her.

Mid-November and Luna has a cold so her treatment has been put off for a week. The good news is her blood count has jumped up and she has grown taller and put on weight. On 23 November, Luna will go back to the hospital for the 6th round of chemotherapy. This they say will be 1 years worth of chemotherapy drugs in 6-7 days. This will knock out most reproducing cells including the bone marrow. Then they will reintroduce the blood stem cells they harvested from her after treatment round 1. She will be in isolation for 21-28 days. The first week she will basically have no immune system as her blood count numbers will fall to zero so she will be in an isolation ward. They again will do MRI's and if there are any spots left than they will do a biopsy to see if they are still living tumors or scar tissue. They said she will have mouth sores, vomiting, most likely a fever and diarrhoea. This is all expected due to the drugs. Her nose feeding tube will be taken out within the first few days because of the vomiting. She will be fed thru her veins. The doctors were very happy with what they are seeing so far and glad there is no longer swelling in the brain.

19 November 2009

Monday 16 November Luna had MRI's on her head and full spine. The head and upper spine came back clear. The lower spine had 1 small spot on it. Tuesday she had her kidney and liver tests which they do before every treatment. All came out good. Wednesday she had a spinal tap. The results showed no tumor cells. Today, Thursday, she went into surgery for a biopsy of the spot shown on the MRI. The surgeon said if anything looked abnormal he would try to remove it. After a little over 2 hours of surgery he called Tom and Luci into a conference room. He told them that nothing looked abnormal and took 2 biopsies for the lab. It will take 2 days for the results. He said he believes they will find NO active tumor cells. He believes that only scar tissue is left but the lab will have to determine that. When the cancer doctor looked at the MRI's to compare the first one to this latest one he said "thank GOD someone must be watching over her."

He said the difference was not good but fantastic. She will be home for a week and then enter the hospital for her 30 treatment a week from 23 November. If

all goes according to schedule she will come home on December 30. The doctors usually never say the word cancer. They say she will come home tumor cell free. The next 30 day treatment will consist of the first 6 days of chemotherapy drugs, a year's worth, then 2 days of rest than her blood stem cells will be reintroduced to her. The chemotherapy drugs will kill her bone marrow and blood cells for about 10 days. Then they expect her blood counts to begin to rise. This chemotherapy is to kill any undetected cells. We thank you all for your prayers because as the doctor said 'thank God someone is watching over her'. She will still need all your prayers and thoughts because this next treatment is very rough. After her treatment the doctors will set up a schedule where they will test her hoping the cancer does not return.

24 November 2009

Luna's doctor called her parents, Tom and Luci, today to tell them that "LUNA HAS NO DETECTABLE TUMOR CELLS." The word cancer is not normally used. Luna still has a rough time ahead over the next 30 days (see update 19 November). Her admission to hospital has been delayed until 30 November as she has a cold. Please continuing praying for her that there are no undetected tumor cells and that she grows stronger and better. The day for Luna to be cured by Our Lord is upon her. Praise be to God and All His Angels and Saints.

1 December 2009

Luna went into the hospital on Monday 30 November. Since she has a cold they ran several tests on Monday evening. They did a chest x-ray which came back good as clear. They took samples from her nose and under arm with cotton covered sticks. Then they put another tube down her nose to suction out mucus in her throat. These samples were sent to their lab. Then they changed her chest dressing covering the tubes coming out of her chest. If that was not enough, they gave her 2 flu shots. Since this is the first time she has had a flu shot they gave the first one a month ago and had to follow up with a second one yesterday. The other flu shot was for the N1H1 flu. After all that they decided to send her home Tuesday around lunch time. They said she had too much mucus in her throat and this would cause adverse effects do to the type of chemotherapy drugs that she will receive. On one hand it was great she was there getting her last chemotherapy treatment, but better they really are checking her for possible problems before they proceed. They are

giving her antibiotics to stop the cough and reduce the mucus and want her back again on Sunday 7 December.

6 December 2009

On Sunday afternoon on their way to the hospital, Tom, Luci, Oliver and Luna stopped by the house of her grandparents, Tom and Cathy. Oliver stayed as Tom and Luci took Luna to the hospital. With God's help this will be her last chemotherapy treatment. The last 3 days she has been in the greatest spirits. She has been laughing and walking, or rather running, all over the place. They decorated their Christmas tree today and Oliver and Luna were so excited. She has a very hard 14-16 days ahead of her. She is due to come home in 30 days. The family will have Christmas on Dec. 25th and again about Jan 7th. Tom Plunkett II will be spending the night of Christmas Eve so Tom and Luci will be home with Oliver for Christmas. The next day is when her counts should start to go up. The doctors refer to the day her counts begin to rise as the day she is revived. I cannot think of a better day for that than Christmas Day. A friend of the family from Scotland calls this God-incidences not co-incidences.

8 December 2009

Luna was in the greatest of spirits in hospital today. There is going to be a rough period coming up. With God's blessing there will be only 4 more days of chemotherapy then 10 rough days with her counts going to zero. Luna's grandfather, Tom Plunkett II, says 'but with all the prayers said for her and the blessings the Lord has already given to her, I know his glory will shine through the rebuilding of Luna making her stronger and healthier than ever. Thank God for all of the people praying for her. God will bless you all.

Please pray as much as you can for Luna over the next month.

Thank you so much and God Bless You.

14 December 2009

Saturday night 12.12.09 was Luna's last night of chemotherapy. Sunday and Monday were rest days. Tuesday they start to reintroduce her blood stem cells. From Wednesday she will get daily injections to help build the blood cell up and this usually takes 10-14 days once they start the stem cell program for the blood cells to start to rise. For the first 6-8 days the chemo drugs will destroy her bone marrow and blood cells. She will need blood and blood platelets for the next 10-14 days. So anyone wishing to donate blood please call Children's Hospital Blood Donation Center in Los Angeles at 323-361-2441.
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Her hair is starting to grow back. Unfortunately this will all again fall out but the doctors said it will start to re-grow soon after the stem cells are put back in. Her grandfather, Tom Plunkett II says 'I do not know how she can keep smiling. It has to be that she is being watched from someone very high up the ladder and because of all the prayers being said for her.'

Thank you all for your thoughts and prayers for Luna. Going into this last phase it was declared that she had NO DETECTABLE CANCER. This last phase of destroying the bone marrow and blood cells should give her a clean start again. If all goes well she should come home about the 8th of January.'

20 December 2009

Latest update from Luna's grandfather, Tom Plunkett -

It has been 5 days since Luna's blood stem cells were transplanted into her. The next week will be tough on her. Her blood counts are near zero. She is getting blood and platelets to keep her going until her stem cells start to reproduce. Day 0 was when her bone marrow was fully destroyed. Her skin is very red with a few blisters and is similar to bad sunburn. Mucus is forming from her mouth through the entire digestive system. Even swallowing makes her cough and spit it up. There is a little blood in her spit due to the sores in her throat. She does not have any sores in her mouth as most get, thank God. One of her 2 tubes coming from her chest is now blocked. They will probably do surgery to put new tubes in Monday. They say this is because a blocked

tube is a source for infection. They believe her revival day, the day she begins to make her own cells, will be the 10th day which is Christmas Day. Her blood counts should begin to increase. The redness should be a dark red/purple and flake off. The sores in her throat should quickly heal and the mucus will also quickly go away. They said a tremendous difference should be seen by day 14. Day 21 is her expected day to go home. Even with all this, she still smiles and plays with me when I visit her. She needs daily baths with a special soap and her mouth is cleaned out with medicine 3 times a day. I try to get to the hospital by 6 pm to help with her bath. At first the water and soap burned her skin but now she plays in it. It is a 2-3 person job to hold her tubes out of the water, hold her and bath her. She gets a little upset with me for holding her while her Mom Luci cleans her mouth out but that is why she has no mouth sores I believe. 10 minutes later we are playing with cars again and smiling. I cannot wait to have her home, cancer free.

Thank all of you for your prayers for her.

Christmas Day, not a bad day to restart your life!!!

24 December 2009

LUNA'S BLOOD COUNTS MAY HAVE BEGUN TO RISE. The head cancer doctor said this is the quickest anyone has had a rise in the blood counts. They are waiting until tomorrow morning (Christmas Day) to look at readings to see if this is a spike or really starting to rise. They were unable to replace the old tubes in her chest after one became blocked. After the surgery heads and the cancer heads got together they decided there was a bigger chance of infection if removed. So they stuck a line in her forearm and fished it under the skin to the shoulder than into the chest area. So she has one open line in her chest and this new line. The mucus that was caused by the drugs destroying the bone marrow is starting to let up. You can hear her voice is clearing and not so full of liquid. Her skin which turned very red like a bad sunburn is now peeling. This was all expected. Today was the first time in 3 days that she again was smiling, laughing and playing. The last 3 days have been very hard on her. Again, this was expected. Once they are sure the blood counts are rising, than

they will start to taper her off all the drugs and antibiotics she is getting. These were given to control the pain and protect her for the last week as her blood counts were at less than 0.10. It sure was great to again see her smile, laugh and play. She gets tired after about 30 minutes of sitting up but should get stronger every day as her blood counts go up. She is getting blood and platelets every few days. Once a week Luna's grandfather Tom is donating platelets and next week he will do platelets and blood. The family thank those who have gone down to Children's Hospital and donated in her name.

With God's help, Luna may come home in 7-10 days.

Thank you all for your prayers for Luna, they have really made a difference.

25 December 2009

The doctors refer to the improvement in Luna's blood counts as amazing. As soon as her tummy can hold some of the milk product and they feed her through her nose tube, she can come home. She has not had anything through the stomach for almost a month. They have been feeding her through the veins. A full round of testing is scheduled for Jan 27th. This next story brought a smile to my face when I first heard it and then a tear to my eye the more I think about it. A little boy about 2 rooms down from Luna was crying kind of loud. Luna asked her Mom why he was crying. She listened for a minute and said he did not like the blood pressure cuff on his arm. Luna always asks us to put our hand over the cuff as it inflates. She told her that he was ok because his Mommy was with him. **Luna said to her, "he is ok because his Mommy and God is with him." She then said "God is with me too."** When Luna's Grandfather stays with her at the hospital, he shows her the St. Oliver medal she has by her bed and tells her that St. Oliver is praying to Jesus to help her. He shows her the prayer cards and also tells her they are praying to Jesus for her. He also refers to Baby Jesus in the manger as the one who cured her. Tom doesn't believe he has used the term God while talking to Luna. He just figured with her being so young she would understand Jesus or Baby Jesus. 'Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me'.

14 January 2010

Luna is home! Doctors decided to take the tube out from her forearm and leave her chest tubes in. She will have to return to the hospital 2-3 times a week for blood work and tests. Her blood counts are rising on their own which suggests that her bone marrow transplant using her own stem cells is working. Her high counts suggest her body is accepting them and multiplying. She will have basically no immune system for the next 3 months. She is to have limited visitors with no one in being sick. They had to wash all the bedding and have the curtains cleaned. She has not seen her brother, Oliver for 4 weeks. Looking at the picture it is as though she knew she would be going home soon. This is the mood she has been in for the last several days. She will have another full set of MRI's and tests at the end of January. Right now she has **NO DETECTABLE CANCER CELLS.**

Thank all of you for your prayers and thoughts because the Lord has truly heard them.

7 January 2010

Luna had her first scheduled visit at the hospital today. Her blood counts are still rising. She has grown and gained weight thru all of this which medical staff say is remarkable. She is having a little trouble with her stomach getting use to the milk feeding thru her nose tube again. It was over a month that she was feed thru the veins. They are going to reduce the amount of feeding to force her to eat by mouth. She is now starting to bite on things. She has another scheduled visit next week due to the adjustment in her feeding. They said that due to the high blood count levels no blood tests will be needed next week. If no problems come up the next blood test may be on Jan 27th the day she goes in for all new MRI's. 2 days later they will review the results with her parents. If all is clear than they will remove the remaining tubes very shortly. At that time they will discuss her future medical needs. It will take about 6 months for the bone marrow to rebuild to a safe level. She is on a research program, basically an experimental program. They said the kind and amounts of the

chemotherapy drugs used could not have worked any better. For the next few months she basically has no immune system and she can pick up infections and diseases very easily. So they have to limit the visitors and make sure no one is sick, cold or flu, that comes over. They said they have learned a lot from Luna. The Lord has blessed her and us by casting out her cancer. There are NO DETECTABLE CANCER CELLS today. Please keep praying for her that this cancer never returns. Please forward this to everyone you know and ask them to pray for all those affected by this horrible disease.

9 January 2010

Luna is doing great and last night she took 4-5 steps on her own. She usually gets to walking on her own again then it's time for another chemotherapy treatment and back to square zero. Santa Claus brought her a tricycle and last night her Mom, Luci, put her on it and pushed her around. Luna's speech is now better than before she got sick but she is still afraid to try to eat much but is trying little bits of things. Soon they will begin speech and occupational (doing daily things) and physical therapy. Luci is trying to get it Children's Hospital rather than a clinic. It hard to believe how good Luna is looking and doing. Her color is about normal.

Luna's favourite movie is Cars by Disney. There is a car named Luigi who owns a tire shop. He has tires stacked in front of his store and they get knocked over from time to time which makes Luna laugh like crazy. When her Grandfather Tom asked what she wanted for Christmas she asked for a stack of tires. Tom found this little cars set with Luigi's tire store and many tires you could set up and knock down. She plays with it all the time and the first night would not go to bed without it.

All Luna's medicines have been stopped. Knowing that she doesn't have an immune system, it is scary to stop the antibiotics now but this will make her own system build up. Early next week Luna's Grandfather Tom will go to the hospital to donate blood. Luna will probably not need any but he knows that there other little ones who will. Doctors say that in six months Luna will need

her vaccinations again as the original were also destroyed with her bone marrow.

Mum and Dad, Luci and Tom, gave Luna a pink soccer ball. Her brother, Oliver, told her that as soon as she can play outside he will put his soccer shirt on and they will kick soccer balls in the front yard. One day Oliver told his Dad that he wanted to marry Luna. Tom told him that you cannot marry your sister. Oliver said 'If I marry her then I can take care of her and she will never leave us to go into the hospital again.' A very special little guy is Oliver.

Luna's Grandfather, Tom, says 'Every day I pray to Jesus, the Holy Mother, St. Oliver Plunkett, St. Jude, St. Peregrine and St. Damien. I think about all the people who are praying for Luna Maria and the many more I do not even know of. I do not know who's prayer to who was answered. I do know that someone's prayer for Luna Maria was heard and answered by our Lord. I believe we all have been part of this miracle and I thank all of you for your part in saving Luna Maria Plunkett.

17.1.10

Luna is doing GREAT. She has started to eat a little by mouth. As soon as she starts eating enough so she can hold her weight they will remove the feeding tube in her nose. They still have to feed her through it at night but are cutting down the time to make her eat more by mouth. This slow transition is needed for her stomach and digestive system to get used to solid foods again. On January 26th or 27th she will have an MRI done on her brain, upper and lower spine. If they are clear then they will take the remaining tubes from her chest.

She is walking around the house by herself. Her speech has returned and it is probably even better than before she got sick. The tumor affected her motor skills (eating, talking, walking and the entire right side of her body). It looks as if there will be no lasting effects as everything seems to be coming back well. Her brother, Oliver, is having a good time playing with her now that she is home. The doctors were very happy with her progress when she saw them this week. Her next visit is not until the day before her MRIs. The doctors said

that alone is unbelievable as most need blood for the first month that they go home but Luna has not had to have any. Her blood counts have passed doctor's expectations.

Luna has gone from a very poor outlook to a remarkable outcome. Her Grandfather, Tom, says 'but then I guess that is why they are called miracles!!! The more I think about Luna, I believe the miracle workers are all those who pray for her. The Lord was the one who granted the miracle for all of us.'

27.1.10

Luna had her MRI's on her brain and upper and lower spine yesterday. Her Mom and Dad met with the doctors today and they again confirmed there was NO DETECTABLE CANCER. They are scheduling surgery to remove the tubes in her chest for next week. They said there is still healing going on in the brain and where they did the biopsy of the spine. She will have to have MRI's every 3 months for the next 2 years. The Doctors said they are thrilled with her progress. THANK GOD and all of you for praying for her and being a part of this MIRACLE.

Tom Plunkett II

25.2.10

Luna had her tubes taken out of her chest today. They made a small cut in her chest to remove them. After she woke up from the surgery and was dressed to come home, she noticed the tubes were gone. Tom said she felt her chest and pulled up her shirt and said " My tubes are gone". She had to be at the hospital at 5:30 am so I was at their house at 4:30 am and stayed there to get Oliver off to school. Tom said they came home and all took a nap. When she got up she kept going from room to room getting different things to play with. Usually she sits and asks one of them to get the things she wants. It was like strings had been cut to set her free. Now all we need is for her to start eating enough to remove the feeding tube. Some days she tries to eat more but

won't eat the next. It will just take time since her body has not had to eat by mouth since April. She is looking great and we can see improvement every day. Tom and Luci are still waiting for the insurance to OK her to get into the physical, speech and occupational therapies. They are having a prince and princess party on Saturday for the family. This will be the first time all 5 grandkids will be together since Luna got sick. I will take pictures and send them out Saturday night.

Thank all of you for your prayers and thoughts for Luna and all of us. It has been a tough year but your prayers and GOD'S blessings have pulled us through. She will have MRI's every 3 months for 2 years and with your continued prayers and GOD's miracles, Luna will beat this cancer. **Tom Plunkett II**

12.2.10

When I watch Luna run around and listen to her talk, it is hard to believe it has only been 1 month since she came home. When she came home she could not walk without holding your hand. Her rapid improvement is the result of all of our prayers (and that includes everyone who is praying for her) being heard. I have caught myself several times just watching her and feeling overwhelmed by knowing that I have been lucky enough to see one of GOD'S miracles firsthand. I cannot really explain this feeling but there is no doubt when you feel it. Every day I thank GOD for his blessings and miracle given to Luna and ask that he does the same for everyone suffering from these diseases. Especially little Madison and Steven McIntosh. **Tom Plunkett II**

26.2.10

Luna is doing great. Last week her brother Oliver had a Presidents Day music program. Luna was singing along with the music and even called his name out once or twice. Her walking has come a long way to where most of the time she does not want to hold your hand. Her eating gets better every day and even

called his name out once or twice. Her walking has come a long way to where most of the time she does not want to hold your hand. Her eating gets better every day and I believe soon the feeding tube in her nose will come out. They only feed her from the machine during the night. She was getting 3 cans of milk supplement but now it is cut down to 2 trying to force her to eat enough during the day by mouth to take the tube out. She has not had to eat by mouth since last April and it will just take time to get her use to the idea

After the show it was off to Baskin Robins for ice cream. Her speech is doing very good. Grandpa Tom loves to hear her make up songs and sing them especially when she does not know you are listening. Her next MRI's are at the end of April. She will have MRI's+ every 3 months for the next 2 years. About July her immune system will be high enough to give her the child immunization shots that were destroyed with the chemotherapy and bone marrow transplant.

Thank you all for your prayers and thoughts because that is what has helped her get this far.

4.3.10

It will not be long before Luna has more hair than grandpa!! The shadow on her head is about a quarter of an inch long. They have reduced her nightly milk supplement to 1 1/2 cans from 3. By the end of the week they will cut it to 1 can and if she can hold her weight for 4-5 days than they will give Tom and Lucy the OK to pull the feeding tube or bring her in for them to do it. Right now I believe Tom and Lucy want to do it. Not seeing the tube in her nose will put a lot behind them. As you can see, Luna is doing GREAT. Anyone wondering if prayers really work should take a look at this miracle. I have said it before that I used to wonder what it would be like to see one of GOD'S miracles first hand.

IT IS GREAT !!!

Thank you all for praying for this miracle.

9.3.10

Last weekend was a sleep over at Grandma and Grandpa's. It was Luna's first sleep over since last April. She was happy to see her cousins Noah and Sam. Luna is doing great. She is down to 1 can a night feeding of the milk supplement. This weekend the feeding tube may come out.

11.3.10

It took 11 months but Luna Maria now has no tubes, no ports and no IV's. Her hair now covers her entire head, about 1/4 of an inch long and growing. She was to start physical therapy this week but the doctor's office called and had to cancel due as the doctor was sick. So it is scheduled again to start next week. She no longer requires feeding thru the night on the machine. They will watch her weight closely to make sure she is eating enough. She has to take antibiotics every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This will be now given to her thru her mouth instead of the tubes. This is needed until mid July. At that time they will test her immune system and it should be at the point to again give her the child vaccinations that were destroyed during the last chemotherapy and bone marrow transplant treatment. It has to rise enough on its own before they can start the vaccinations.

Last night was the first time she has gone to bed where Tom and Luci did not have to worry about her rolling over and pulling a tube out. She was running and playing and putting on her Nemo hat most of the evening. Luci pulled the tube out. They said Luna was probably more scared than anything. Having a tube pull all the way from your stomach thru your nose must have felt really strange. Thank GOD she has usually had a smile on her face and in great spirits. The end of April will be her next MRI's. It has been a tough year and without all your prayers I really do not know how we would have made it. There is no doubt that she and our family have been blessed. She has not had to receive blood or platelets since coming home. No infections and no fevers. When she came home in January after her bone marrow transplant, the doctors told us not to be surprised if she needed blood and platelets a few times and ran a fever and even got an infection. These are fairly common. They are very surprised at her strong recovery. We thank all of you for being a part of this miracle.

25.3.10

Luna went to the doctors today. Since the insurance company did not ok the MRI's yet they have been rescheduled for next month. They took Luna's blood and checked her counts. They are all above what they were expecting. This is why I believe the doctors agreed to reschedule the MRI's for next month. She will still have antibiotics every weekend for the next 2 months. She now has to drink them since she has no tubes in her. They were very happy that she has not lost any weight since Luci removed the feeding tube.

31.3.10

Last Wednesday Luna was due to have her MRI's since it has been 3 months since her blood counts started to rise after the stem cell transplant. On Tuesday afternoon Luci got a call from the hospital saying the insurance company has not OK'd it yet. They asked her to still bring Luna in for blood counts and other testing. They said her blood counts were so good that they will not fight the insurance company right now as long as the MRI's can be done in April. Luna will still have to take antibiotics on the weekends for the next 2 months for sure. They figure in June or July they will probably start to give her the child vaccinations again to rebuild her immune system. Her hair is about 3/4 on an inch long and covers her whole head. She goes to physical therapy 1 day a week and is doing well. The occupational therapy will start as soon as the insurance company approves it. As always she is in great spirits. Many of you have emailed us back saying how blessed she has been. We know that her progress has been only possible because of all the prayers that have been said on her behalf by all.

7.4.10

Luna had an appointment with the eye doctor at Children's Hospital today. He examined her eyes and said she has NO damage from the cancer, the chemotherapy or the brain surgery. Her one eye that goes crossed is a problem many children between the ages of 3 and 5 have. It takes an outpatient surgery of about 1 hr to correct the muscles moving the eye. He said she sees well with both eyes. Right now the muscles are reacting to the brain signals one at a time instead of both together. He said he will check her in 30 days and again in 60 days and if it does not clear up on its own than he will set up the surgery. So thank GOD this is not related to her cancer, chemotherapy or the brain surgery. The insurance company has just ok'd the MRI's so they have been scheduled for April 26th. Tomorrow Luna will go to

her weekly physical therapy. They are working on improving her balance that is slightly off. The eye doctor believes some of that will improve with the correcting of her eyes. The physical therapy is needed due to where the position of the brain tumor was at the base which controls all your movements. They are all very happy with her progress so far. Luna's hair is now getting long enough to start sticking up. It is hard to believe that it has been almost 1 year since they operated on her and removed the brain tumor. (at the end of April).

We cannot thank you all enough for all of the prayers and thoughts you have given to her and us.

13.4.10

Luna had her first ballet class yesterday. When the family got there it was for kids 3-6 years old. So next week she will go to the earlier class, it is for just 3 year olds. She would only sit by Luci and would not go out by the other girls. She did do some of the stretching exercises like touching her toes while sitting down. This should really help her with her balance because the insurance company will only ok one physical therapy class a week.

27.4.10

Luna had the results of her latest MRI and once again there are NO DETECTABLE CANCER CELLS. She was at hospital for five hours from preparation to recovery and results. Luna will have MRIs every 3 months for the next two years.

She was home by 12.30 p.m. and in just in time to pick Oliver up from school then it was off to ballet class. Since the insurance company will only authorize one physical therapy class a week, the balet class offered by the city parks and recreation department works out great. With just 2 classes so far she can now turn a complete circle by herself. When she came home in January she had to be held up to walk.

After ballet class it was off to Oliver's T-Ball game. He is on the Angels Team and with all the angels in Heaven rooting for Luna it was time for her to root for them!! They have snacks after the game and they always bring extra for Luna. Even after getting up at 5 am, spending 5 hours at hospital, doing her ballet class and going to Oliver's game, she still has a smile on her face.

She wears a little cross necklace. When her Grandfather, Tom, first saw it he told her it was very pretty and she simply said 'Jesus Helps Me'. Tom looked at her and thought 'Thank God He does'.

Luna's hair is really starting to grow out and is just starting to grow over her ears. It was just over a year ago, on 21 April 2007, that cancer was detected and we give humble thanks to Our Lord for answering all our prayers and taking Luna on the path to full health.

THANKS all of you for your prayers and thoughts and for being a part of this miracle.

19.5.10

Luna is doing great. She is the happiest little one ever. She still goes to ballet class once a week. She usually will not let go of mom Luci's hand. She really watches the teacher and other little ones in the class. You can really see the improvement in her balance. Last week she could not go to physical therapy due to a problem with the insurance company needing to review her case every 6 weeks. Hopefully this is now cleared up and she can continue on Thursday. She will again see the eye doctor in a few weeks so he can check on her eyes.

Some days it looks like they are starting to straighten out than then one eye seems to go back to crossed. Thank God this is not due to the cancer or treatments. The doctor first guessed that surgery would be needed about the end of July on the muscle of the eye. This procedure takes about an hour.

23.5.10

Luna has missed her last 2 Thursday physical therapy classes due to problems with the insurance getting the ok to the hospital. They say the classes will resume soon but there is a paper work problem holding things up. Luna's balance is getting better and her hair continues to grow. She really enjoys chasing her cousins around.

Luna has held and even gained weight during the post bone marrow transplant period. Her next blood tests and MRIs will be at the end of July. She still takes antibiotics 2 days a week as her immune system is rebuilding. Hopefully, she will start her immunization shots after the July MRIs. She has another appointment with the eye doctor soon and if surgery is needed it will be done after the July MRIs.

A few weeks ago Luna was not steady enough on her feet to stand without someone holding her. She still wants to hold your finger as she walks around it. It is hard to believe how far she has come since she got out of the hospital in January. It is without a doubt that all the prayers and thoughts from all of you and all the others praying for her are being answered. The Make A Wish Foundation has contacted Tom and Luci about Luna. They want to set up an interview and meet Luna. I never knew how this worked but they interview the patients and families before they make a decision to grant a wish or not. Thank you all for your prayers for Luna and her family.

