

KWANZ's Young Achiever—ELLIE

BY KWANZ Mother— Bryre

Ellie was diagnosed with Oligoarticular Arthritis on the 29th of November 2015 at 18 months of age. Not long after she started walking at 12 months old, Ellie would have episodes of not being able to bend her knees, then her knees started to swell.

My mother commented that Ellie's knees looked like that of a little old lady with Arthritis.

Once we moved back to New Zealand from Australia, things got worse for Ellie. After multiple trips to the emergency department, she had x-rays taken which showed inflammation in both knees. We had to wait a further 6 weeks for a diagnosis.



Before coming back to New Zealand, Ellie caught Influenza A. The Doctors needed to rule out Toxic synovitis from the Influenza. First we tried steroid injections but they only lasted for 3 months, then her elbows, ankles, fingers and toes started to flare up. We then had to put her onto Methotrexate, which she was on for 3 years.

While she was on the Methotrexate, she caught Influenza B which set off her joints again. Her Paediatric Rheumatologist decided to introduce Enbrel in conjunction with Methotrexate, which has changed her life and given Ellie her childhood back. Around a year and a half ago we took Ellie off the Methotrexate.



Ellie has been on the Enbrel injection (etanercept), it is a biologic medicine, for around 3½ years now and has been pain free, and because of this we are looking at taking her off her medication in October 2020!

Ellie really struggled with the injections, so I got her to help me with my daily injections, which really helped her.

Now she helps me with her own injections and there are no tears!

Ellie has become a brave and resilient little girl and this disease does not hold her back from living her life to the fullest! She loves going to school, riding her scooter, and going to the beach.



She also really loves going to the Kids With Arthritis NZ Christmas Parties.

We just want to say a huge thank you to Kids with Arthritis NZ Charitable Trust for all the love and support throughout our journey, we could not have done this without you all.

Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the view of Kids With Arthritis NZ Charitable Trust.

Please remember every journey is unique to that person. Sharing a personal story is an act of kindness; it lets others know they are not alone.

Please check with your child's Specialist or GP if this article has generated medical questions for you.