

Hayley Henke
Walk to Cure Arthritis – Nebraska
Youth Honoree

Hayley was diagnosed with polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis seven years ago. Since then she has had seven surgeries on her knees and has taken many different medications to control her arthritis.

When Hayley first began experiencing pain, she and her parents were told that she was probably having growing pains or emotional issues. A dermatologist suggested that Hayley see an orthopedic surgeon, who diagnosed her with juvenile arthritis. The wait for an appointment with a pediatric rheumatologist was months long, so Hayley began seeing an adult rheumatologist because she was in a great amount of pain. When Hayley finally saw the pediatric rheumatologist she was given a more formal diagnosis and began new treatment.

Hayley's parents were relieved to know why she was in so much pain, but they did not know that such a long road was ahead. Hayley still takes pills and injections to treat her arthritis, but she stays very active. She quit gymnastics shortly after her diagnosis but was able to find new activities she loves, especially basketball and volleyball.

During a flare, Hayley sometimes has to use crutches or a wheelchair. She and her family are very grateful for the support from family, friends and Hayley's school. Still, Hayley's mom says, "There have been so many times where I have shed tears and lost hope of anyone understanding what my daughter is going through."

Hayley and her family have been grateful to find a community of support within the Arthritis Foundation. After attending the JA Conference, Hayley and her family realized that there are so many families going through the same experience. Hayley's mom was so thankful for everything she learned at the JA Conference, "The conference not only educated me on medications, additional care and treatments, and school rights but it also showed me that I wasn't alone."

Hayley and her family want to help others find help and hope and that is why they are proud to be volunteers for the 2016 Walk to Cure Arthritis!

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation, www.arthritis.org is the Champion of Yes. We exist to conquer arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults, and is the nation's leading cause of disability. For nearly 70 years, we have upheld our unwavering promise to meet the unique and urgent needs of families living with juvenile arthritis (JA). We lead the fight for the arthritis community to help conquer everyday battles through life-changing information and resources, access to optimal care, advancements in science and

community connection. Our goal is to chart a winning course, guiding families in developing personalized plans for living a full life – and making each day another stride toward a cure. Our tools and resources help more children say Yes to making life better. Visit www.KidsGetArthritisToo.org, the online home for the 300,000 families living with arthritis.