



Kassie
Arthritis Walk Honoree
Lincoln, NE

Kassie is a very strong and independent young lady, whose beautiful smile hides a painful journey. She was diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA) when she was just 2 years old. Today, at age 12 she is amazed at how far she has come. Kassie has faced the day-to-day difficulties associated with her JRA. There have been times when going up and down stairs, dressing and feeding herself were monumental challenges. Kassie loves to play sports, and participate in other activities like swimming with her family and friends. JRA has made many of the things that she loves to do a test of her strength, and she has passed with flying colors.

Kassie has moved from swollen fingers and toes, multiple surgeries and medications, to just one shot a week. She has spent many hours researching her condition, listening and learning from her doctors, and heeding every lesson from her own life experiences. This has helped her to remain in control, and lead an active life. Kassie is grateful for the friends she has met that share her same trials, and considers Tommy, Adrian and Jack as her forever friends. She credits her JRA with helping her become a more responsible person. Each day when she wakes up she wonders to herself what struggles the day will bring, but she has developed the skills to cope with whatever comes her way.

Kassie is quick to point out that she wants to learn more about JRA so that she can help others who are new to the battle. The power and vigor that she possesses becomes clear when she speaks about arthritis. "No, I didn't ask for this disease, but it is something that I will have to live with for the rest of my life, with strength and grace."

It is because of the tremendous courage and determination that Kassie displays, that the Arthritis Foundation is proud to have her as our 2012 Arthritis Walk Honoree.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults and 300,000 children, and is the nation's leading cause of disability. To conquer this painful, debilitating disease, we support education, research, advocacy and other vital programs and services.