

Dominic Mazziotta

Dominic Mazziotta has a condition so rare that only 40 people in the world have received the same diagnosis – and he is the only pediatric case.

The warning signs began in late 2008 when a huge bruise covered his leg after the 11-year-old took a simple fall from a skateboard. It healed, then another fall produced a new large, ugly bruise. His mother Karen said, "I'm a paramedic. Something is wrong here; it's not a normal bruise for a normal kid."

Medical analysis showed a very low platelet count, but repeated tests could not locate the problem. Next, doctors did a biopsy from two small needle pricks in his back. Dominic bled for 28 hours from those two tiny holes, losing one-third of his blood volume. During his long stay in the hospital that November, he received between 20 and 30 units of red blood cells, as well as platelets.

Finally, medical personnel determined the ailment was Kaposi's Hemangioendothelioma with Kasabach-Merritt Syndrome and Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation: a disease combination so rare that no prognosis can be given.

Dominic has received chemotherapy regularly since his ordeal began. Hundreds of blood donations have been made in Dominic's name at various blood drives. When Dominic was told of this he first responded by saying, "That's not fair. Other kids need it worse than me." His family explained that these donations would also go to other people and that many patients benefited from these drives.

"My family can not express the depths of gratitude we have for each of you who have been warriors in our fight for Dominic's life," says Karen Mazziotta. "You are our angels on Earth and we thank God for you every day."



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