

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cheer on Bella and her dream to fly.

Despite being diagnosed with a debilitating illness, young Bella was determined from an early age to lead the life of an ordinary girl.

Bella was diagnosed with a rare disorder called eosinophilic oesophagitis, (EoE) an inflammatory condition of the oesophagus. In Bella's case, it made her allergic to most foods from the age of 18 months. Whilst there is no cure for this condition, Bella was determined to live a normal life.

Bella's Mum, Sarah said 'Bella has always been determined to not let this life-altering condition rule her life. In a society that is so focused on food, being unable to eat a normal diet and live with severe food restrictions is tough. To watch Bella at birthday parties and celebrations is difficult. The temptation to eat a cupcake is hard to overcome, especially when Bella was little and didn't really understand. It's always hard to watch your little child feeling left out.'

When Bella was 7 years old, the difficult decision was made for Bella to have a feeding tube inserted in her stomach as she was simply not receiving enough nutrition.

Bella and her 'tummy tube' or 'TT', as she liked to call it, was a massive part of her life for four years. Bella always hid the fact that she had the tube and was often embarrassed by it, but she knew that the tube made her life easier, more normal, if only during the day, enabling her to receive the majority of her nutrition at night time.

Bella said 'At first I really hated the 'TT,' it was a reminder of my condition you know, and that I am not like everyone else. But as time went on I began to feel stronger. The 'TT' helped me to have enough energy and strength to participate in sports. A couple of years ago I chose cheerleading as my passion. When I am flying, I feel on top of the world. I am not thinking about my next medical appointment or the next tube feed, when I am in the air.'

Whilst the feeding tube had liberated her to some degree, Bella was still not content, her dream was to be a 'flyer,' and wear the cheerleading crop top like all her team mates. So, in March this year Bella underwent surgery to remove her feeding tube.

She can now wear her 'Sunshine Coast Cheerleading Vipers' crop top with pride, and whilst she is still reliant on supplementing her limited diet by drinking elemental formula, cheerleading has changed her life.

Today, Bella is not only flying, she is soaring. Bella has been able to get one step closer to living the life of an ordinary 12 year old through the research and fundraising efforts of ausEE. The Australian charity is committed to raising public awareness and supporting the medical community for further research into eosinophilic disorders (EGID), in Australia.



To help more kids like Bella why not take the ausEE Top 8 Challenge on August 8 during National EOS Awareness Week 2-8 August 2015.

The Top 8 Challenge involves excluding 8 common allergenic foods from your diet for a day or one meal on August 8.

This means no milk, eggs, wheat, fish, peanuts, tree nuts, soy or shellfish.
There is NO CURE and one of the common treatment options patients follow is an Elimination diet which can mean removing the Top 8 common allergenic foods.

Jump on the website today at <http://www.top8challenge.com/> and join in the challenge, buy a wristband or virtual badge and show your support for kids like Bella.

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