

Molly was 8 when she was diagnosed. We have no family history of diabetes. My mum had died in February, aged 53. It was a real shock, she had cancer but this was only diagnosed 6 days before she died. We decided to blow our savings and take the girls to Florida in the June. We had a fantastic time, it was just what we needed. Girls were fine on holiday, Molly was a little tired at times but, after all, we were in Florida, whizzing around theme parks, staying up late. She was drinking loads, but then again, we all were, it was hot and humid. She needed to go to the toilet more, but she was drinking more. It all made sense, nothing seemed odd.

When we got back, she returned to school but two days later the teacher called me in for a chat. Molly seemed a bit distant, vague, was there something wrong? I put it down to jet-lag, nothing more at first, but something nagged in the back of my mind that things weren't right. I kept an eye on her, and she still was drinking loads but it was warm weather and I continued to make excuses. One day, about a week after we returned from holiday, she came home from school and fell asleep on the sofa, something that she didn't normally do. Then she wet the sofa. She was distraught. I still didn't get it.

On 1st July she went to school as normal, but in the morning she looked dreadful, really vacant and just not with it. I was brooding about it all day, and somebody suggested that she could have diabetes. I decided to ring the doctor and see if I could get an appointment. Of course, the doctor had no appointments left but by this time I was quite panicky so insisted that I see our health visitor as a minimum (we didn't have a triage nurse system at the time).

As I waited in the playground to pick her up, the teacher waved me in. She said she was seriously worried about Molly because she was slurring her speech and to her she seemed really ill. I reassured her that I had made an appointment for later that day. What must that teacher have thought of me, she had alerted me the week before that things weren't right. Anyway, I went to the doctors and saw our Health Visitor. I had forgotten the mention of diabetes and I recall saying that I wondered if Molly had a urine infection, but I couldn't understand why her speech was slurred.

The HV decided that I needed to see a doctor so she made me an appointment for an hour's time. Molly in the meantime wanted tea so I took both girls home and started cooking. I was halfway through cooking when Molly walked into the kitchen and vomited everywhere. It was pink, and smelt funny and wasn't like sick at all. I still remember the helpless feeling of knowing that I was on the brink of finding out that Molly was really ill. I had no idea what it was, but some deep instinct told me there was something very wrong. She ate her tea and off we went to the doctor.

She was sick three more times in the doctors. When I went in I saw a different doctor from my usual one. I told her the symptoms and she asked if she could prick Molly's finger. She did, and the reading was 33.7mmol. I had no idea what this meant. I remember as clear as day her pushing a box of tissues towards me and holding my hand and saying "Mrs Todd, I think Molly has diabetes. You have to go to the hospital". I just looked at her, and I remember thinking, oh dear I will need to take time off work for a hospital appointment. How stupid is that!! Then it dawned on me, she was ringing the hospital now, she was arranging for Molly to be admitted now, and that's when it suddenly dawned on me.

Just remembering it now is making me cry. I was told to go straight to the hospital,

straight to the children's ward where they were waiting for me. I raced down there, I broke every speed limit, I didn't care, and all the time Molly was dozing off and I thought she was going into a coma. I was petrified. I kept on talking to her and asking her to show me the way to the hospital, anything to keep her awake. I called my husband who worked away and told him to come home now. We got to the ward and they were fantastic. Molly was vomiting all over the place, they were trying to get a line in but her veins had collapsed and they hurt her. She still has a phobia to this day of having a canula put in her hand as this is her lasting memory of her diagnosis. She was in DKA. She had tubes and drips and wires and she wasn't my girl, and I was looking at her thinking what the hell is going on.

Dave arrived and I was so pleased to see him, but we didn't have a clue what was happening. The doctors were trying to sort Molly out, not explaining anything to us. Dave eventually went home to Laura at 11pm and I stayed with Molly. I remember crying my heart out, I was at the same hospital where my mum had died a few months before and all I could think about was what if Molly died. What would we do?

The next day she was really very poorly. We had doctors trying to explain what it was all about, the DSN, the paediatric consultant, the dietician, everybody. Goodness knows how we took it all in, but we did. The next day Molly was so much better, the insulin had kicked in and she was able to get out of bed. She wheeled her drip to the bathroom and she had a bath. She sat in the bath and I could see her spine - HOW HAD I MISSED THIS WEIGHT LOSS!! The relatives then began arriving and everyone was suddenly an expert on diabetes. Don't you just love the internet.... not! It was information overload for us. Whilst we were pleased to see everyone, we also needed the peace to come to terms with what was happening. Everyone was confusing us with their well-intentioned advice.

5 days later, Molly was allowed out of hospital for half a day. She had already done her own injections and BM's. The paediatric consultant had told her she was the team leader and we were all of her team, there to support her. She was the boss, and boy did she take it on board. She decided she wanted to go to school to say hello to all her friends. I took her in after lunch and she stood up and did a talk on "I have diabetes". Her friends sat there as quietly as could be and listened, and then they all wanted their fingers pricked! I sat at the back of the classroom with her teacher, tears streaming down our faces. I knew then that we would cope, that Molly was far braver than I ever was. She took it all in her stride and just accepted that this is who she was now. We have had down days since - when the school at first refused to supervise Molly giving herself her lunchtime injection when she moved to MDI. We threatened them with the DDA and the local paper and after numerous meetings it was agreed that a teacher would supervise Molly. I never spoke properly to the Head again. And we have had up's - Molly deciding to go on the pump. Hard work, but well worth it. It's amazing that Molly is now 14 years old. I can still remember that awful year like it was yesterday and even as I type this I find myself welling up.

I have read all the other stories and am thankful that Molly's diagnosis was picked up quickly. I was the one who didn't take it seriously and who didn't act quickly enough. I just can't believe I missed all those signs..... Our care in North Wiltshire is very good. We have a very supportive team who are very pro-pump, thank goodness. The times we have been in hospital for operations (oral and coeliac biopsy) her care has always been fantastic. I feel quite shattered now, re-living all of this. I am going to go upstairs now and give both girls a hug.