



My name is Brandon; I'm a 14 year old cancer patient. I use to love to play hockey and football. Unfortunately in February 2007 I was diagnosed with a malignant tumor in my left femur called Osteosarcoma (bone cancer). While playing hockey my doctor thought I pulled my groin muscle and it continued to get worse so I went for an MRI and that is when the tumor was found. The tumor took over all the muscles and my left femur so they had to cut 12 inches of my femur bone out and put in a titanium rod and reconnect the muscles. It was horrible the first day after surgery trying to get out of bed. It took an hour and a half just to get up. I was tired but I knew that I could do it. I had to. Two weeks after the surgery the metal rod dislocated. I laid in the emergency room 13 hours before being transported 100 miles for an emergency total hip replacement.

It was rough when I was first diagnosed with cancer, knowing that I could no longer play contact sports or any sport that I love. I played hockey since I was seven years old. What I loved so much about hockey was the good times with my teammates and being able to skate and have fun. This year I was going to be on the freshman football team but as you know that got interrupted.

I found a way to stay involved with hockey. My coach is going to help me get my coaching card so I can assist with coaching younger kids to show them how to skate and play the game. I wanted to also stay involved with football so I asked to be the cameraman for the football team. They said yes, but to my surprise they put me on the team as an honorary caption. It's going to be fun. So I go to football practice and the games that I can make.

I have told my friend's parents and grandparents and have also talked on sports radio stations about how important it is to encourage your children to play each game no matter what sport like it's their last. My last hockey game I don't think I gave 100% and I wish I would have since that was the last hockey game I will ever play.

Right now my game is battling cancer. What drives me to succeed is knowing that I have the strength to get through it and beat it. Through the dreadful times of the effects from chemotherapy and the parties and summer events that I miss while I'm in the hospital I know that someday it will be over. It's rough, there were some crying times and I had some bad experiences along the way but I have also experiences some good things. I try not to think about what I have lost, I think about what to do next. It's hard to go back to the hospital and go through chemo but I always look forward to the days that I'm out of the hospital and try to enjoy every minute of every day. That is how to succeed "stay strong- do it!"

By: Brandon