



Jackson Dickson, 2 years old

Suffering from congenital chylothorax

“It’s so beautiful and meaningful to see an entire province pull together and raise money for sick children. For us, it means better health care in a fight against a disease that so unfairly hits the little ones...”



Andrée-Anne’s 29th week ultrasound reveals a large amount of fluid lodged in the lining of her baby’s heart and around his right lung. Because of the pandemic, Mom is transferred alone by air ambulance to the Centre mère-enfant Soleil of the CHU de Québec, where she undergoes a series of tests. The results show that there is a significant amount of fluid accumulation, and that the effusion is likely to exhaust Baby Jackson’s little heart. The doctors inform Andrée-Anne that they are not sure her baby will “make it through the weekend” and that she must remain hospitalized so they can closely monitor Baby’s condition. The goal: to keep him warm in Mom’s belly as long as possible.

Five difficult weeks pass, during which Andrée-Anne is hospitalized, alone and far from Jeremy, her spouse. At 34 weeks of pregnancy, the situation deteriorates: the amount of fluid has increased and a caesarean section is needed. Jeremy is given time to drive from the Magdalen Islands to the City of Québec to witness the birth of his son. Jackson is immediately taken care of by the neonatal team. At only a few days old, he undergoes surgery: a drain is placed in his right lung, and a window is created in his small heart so that the fluid that accumulates there is instead shunted around the lung, where drainage is less risky. A second drain must finally be placed in the heart. Fortunately, Jackson is able to benefit from the best possible conditions for his operations thanks to the heart surgery room funded by Opération Enfant Soleil.

Despite numerous attempts to decrease and ultimately prevent fluid leakage, effusions continue. One night, Jackson’s condition deteriorates, and his heart slows considerably. The next day, his parents are confronted with the words that everyone dreads... “We were afraid to lose him.” Anguish. Panic.

One day, having run out of resources, a fattier milk is added to his diet... Against all odds, the leaks naturally seal themselves up! A few weeks later, the breathing aid is removed, then the PICC line, a venous catheter used to administer medication and take blood samples, and finally all the wires! At four months old, Baby Jackson finally gets his first bath from Mom and Dad, and then his first feeding: memories that will last forever in their minds. Jackson is catching up quickly, which fills his parents with hope. A few weeks go by, and Jackson can finally go home. He is getting better, the appointments are getting less frequent. Although his immune system is quite weak and his lungs are more fragile, he is a vigorous and smiling little boy. The important thing is that today, Jackson is doing well!

Jackson’s family thanks you for being there for him and for all the sick children in Québec!

Andrée-Anne Vigneau and Jeremy Dickson

Little miracles don't happen on their own...

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