



“If all of this had happened 30 years ago, Victor would be dead. Thanks to your donations, the Children’s was able to offer our son quality care that saved his life.”

— Isabelle, Victor’s mom



My son Victor celebrated his 13th birthday last March. His biggest dream is to play soccer again, since the last time he played was two years ago. My son had an accident: on his way to meet his friends, he tripped and hit his head. We didn’t know it then, but that fall would change his life. And ours.

Victor only had a little bump on the side of his head. We never could have imagined it was so serious. But one of his blood vessels had ruptured and blood was accumulating between his brain and his skull. Victor had to be put in an artificial coma. It was horrible. It didn’t seem real. A little fall was suddenly threatening my son’s life.

When he arrived at the Montreal Children’s Hospital, Victor was 10 to 15 minutes from death. They even had to remove part of his skull. Luckily, the operation was a success, thanks to the remarkably skilled neurosurgeon, Dr. Jean-Pierre Farmer. Without your help, the teams in ER, the trauma centre and surgery wouldn’t have had access to the necessary expertise, and my son might not be with us.

After his surgery, Victor spent ten days in a coma. At first, he could only move one eye and was unable to pronounce a single word. My little boy was also suffering from uncontrollable muscle cramps that prevented him from walking.

As a mother, it was heartbreaking. The only possible treatment was a Baclofen pump, and the Children’s is the only pediatric hospital in Quebec to implant them. Victor would never have been able to access this treatment without your donations, which allow the Hospital to attract and retain brilliant specialists.

Now, Victor has started to walk short distances again using crutches. We cherish every small victory. My son could not have been in better hands, and we owe his progress to the Hospital’s ER and trauma teams, as well as the surgeons, nurses and physiotherapists who cared for him. Thanks to your support, my son’s recovery is nothing short of spectacular. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for giving my son a second chance.

Isabelle
— Victor’s mom

What you've helped accomplish



Every day, your generosity plays a vital role in the lives of our young patients. Below are just two examples of the impact of people like you:

Child Life Summer Program

During the summer months, when the days are long and friends are at camp or on holidays, the services of our child life team are in great demand. Thanks to our donors, we can hire students to organize fun activities for patients and their siblings throughout the Hospital.

Carnivals, beach bashes, camping adventures, pyjama days, and ice cream parties bring smiles to cancer patients and their families. Bingo, movie afternoons, arts and crafts, magic shows, and cooking activities are a welcome distraction in the playrooms on the medical and surgical units.

Thanks to you, the summer sun will shine brightly at the Children's.

Kangaroo pumps for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

The Children's NICU needs every available tool to give their fragile patients their very best chance.

Babies born at under 30 weeks are often unable to feed by mouth initially. Kangaroo pumps deliver nutrition via feeding tubes, including breast milk and formula fortified with more calories and protein.

These feeding pumps are vital for delivering the right quantities of food our preemies need. They can sometimes be used for months. Parents may even take a pump when they are discharged, making it easier for them to care for their baby at home.

With the support of donors like you, we now have enough kangaroo pumps for every little baby who needs that extra bit of help to grow and thrive.

Making Surgery Less Scary

Matis was barely six hours old when he underwent his first surgery. Born with esophageal atresia, he has since received over ten surgeries, causing him a lot of anxiety. Luckily, the Montreal Children's Hospital offers the parental presence at induction (PPI) program. Unique to Quebec, the program helps reduce stress for our young patients... and their parents who are trained to accompany their child while they get anaesthesia.



A medical game helps Matis prepare for his operation. Among other things, he'll choose the scent added to his mask.



Matis finds a comforting object to bring into the operating room.



Thanks to the PPI program, Matis finds comfort in the arms of his mom before the operation.



Food Allergies: Ève, the Miracle Child

"We didn't know what would happen if she ate something she was allergic to. Would her throat close up? Would she die?" Paul, little Ève's father

Imagine you can't breathe, your throat is swelling or your entire body is tingling. These are some of the terrifying symptoms of a severe allergic reaction. And that's what baby Ève went through just a few weeks after her birth, when red patches of eczema suddenly covered her little body.

At the age of seven months, the little girl was diagnosed with fourteen allergies, twelve of which were to food. Luckily, her mother, Geneviève, was able to count on the Montreal Children's Hospital. Thanks to donor support, the Hospital is home to the largest pediatric allergy and immunology practice in Canada, and the first program for food desensitization in Quebec.* Ève was able to see a doctor quickly.

Little Ève is now three years old and went from twelve allergies to just two! These extraordinary results were achieved following nearly a month of desensitization treatments at the Children's over the past two years. Dr. Christine McCusker, head of the allergy and immunology division, calls Ève a miracle child. "Ève's case is a rare occurrence. Her parents were willing to continue testing, even after she had allergic reactions. That's not easy," she explains.

"It took a long time, but it changed her life," her mother explains emotionally. "We're so grateful to the Montreal Children's Hospital. Now, life is good!"

**In Quebec, it is estimated that 6% of babies have one or more food allergies.¹ Luckily, these thousands of children can count on expert advice and support from Children's specialists who, thanks to generous research donations, can offer cutting-edge therapies to treat asthma, seasonal and food allergies, as well as allergies to medications or insect venom.*

¹ Allergies Québec, page consulted on February 18, 2019. Statistics [online], URL: <http://allergies-alimentaires.org/fr/statistiques>

The Most Beautiful Sound in the World

Zaïra took a long time to say her first words. Born prematurely, at just 27 weeks, she was transferred to the Montreal Children's Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Diagnosed with a larynx that was too soft, preventing air from passing, she needed a tracheostomy to allow her to breathe, and eat. This was the last option," says Zaïra's mom, Rasheeda.

Thanks to generous support from donors like you, the MCH is able to ensure the gold-standard of care in the NICU, by funding the training these specialized nurses require in the constantly evolving field of neonatal medicine. Zaïra was intubated, which can create other challenges. "By inserting the tube and removing it, it caused inflammation," her father Feguens explained.

In May 2017, just days after her first birthday, Zaïra had her first major surgery. Doctors transplanted cartilage from her ribs into her larynx to strengthen it. The following November she went home for the first time. But she faced another similar surgery four months later. By November 2018 Zaïra could finally breath and eat on her own. And she was beginning to talk.

"When I heard her voice, it was the most beautiful sound in the world," Rasheeda says.

"It was wonderful to see her talking" says Dr. Mylene Dandavino, a pediatrician at the Children's who knows Zaïra well. Zaïra's voice is losing the hoarseness, as she's now talking all the time. But it is still too soon to know if there will be any long-term effects.

"For the voice to be normal, it takes mobile vocal cords," Dr. Dandavino says. "The results are variable. It will be necessary to see with time."





Apple, Pear and Cranberry Crumble

A classic from our cooking workshops that children enjoy making on their own, and love to eat perhaps even more. A guaranteed treat!

Ingredients:

Crumble

1 1/4 cups rolled oats
1/4 cup unbleached flour
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup butter, softened

Filling

1/3 cup maple syrup
3 pears, peeled and sliced
4 apples, peeled and sliced
1/4 cup dry cranberries
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Preparation:

Place oven rack in middle position.
Preheat oven to 180 °C (350 °F).

Crumble

In a bowl, mix together the rolled oats, flour, and brown sugar. Add the butter and mix again. Set aside.

Filling

In a second bowl, mix all the ingredients together.

Pour the filling into a 20 x 20 cm (8 x 8-inch) baking dish and cover with the crumble mixture. Bake for about 50 minutes.

Allow to rest for a few minutes then... enjoy!

5 tips to outsmart seasonal allergies

Allergy season is in full swing! You can't escape pollen or control the weather, but there are several ways you can help your kids avoid sneezing, itching and runny noses when experiencing the great outdoors. Help them stay in the swing of things with these five tips to prevent their allergy symptoms.

1

Check pollen counts.

If the counts are high, you may opt for different activities or have your child wear a hat and tight-fitting athletic sunglasses. You may also use a saline rinse or nasal spray to flush pollen out of the nasal and sinus cavities.

2

Choose your kids' activities wisely.

Children with allergies to grass should avoid playing in a freshly mowed field. Other outdoor activities like swimming might give your child a chance to be outside without stirring up allergens.

3

Hydrate.

Provide your child with a full water bottle and encourage regular drinks. Sneezes and runny noses can leave your child parched.

4

Beware the hands!

Help kids avoid rubbing their itchy eyes. Rubbing will only irritate them, and could make the itchiness even worse.

5

Talk to your child's allergist.

Some children may benefit from taking medication before heading outside to reduce or prevent an allergy attack. Others may need to keep a fast-acting treatment with them.

Your child has uncontrolled seasonal allergies?

Seek advice from our Division of Allergy and Clinical Immunology at the MCH, the largest pediatric allergy practice in Canada.

CARING FOR KIDS RADIOTHON

MAY 29, 2019

514-939-KIDS (5437)

Tune in from 5:30 AM - 7 PM

