



steps

We don't take walking for granted

Caitlin

Diagnosed aged 4
Treatment to date:
Arthrogram, Open
Reduction, Pelvic and
Femoral Osteotomy Right
Hip

Caitlin's Story

Caitlin Rebecca Brown was born almost 2 weeks late on 30th August 2004 by Caesarean section at the William Harvey hospital Ashford, Kent. It wasn't an easy pregnancy as I was sick at least once a day all the way through and it wasn't until they broke my waters that they realised that she was back to back. I couldn't be discharged until the pediatrician had checked Caitlin. Eventually the nurse said we could go as the pediatrician had seen her the previous day, so we could have left at 9am!! Looking back now I wish I had double-checked that he had seen her because maybe it would have been picked up sooner.

It was when Caitlin was about 6 months old I lost all faith in her health visitors I stopped taking her to get weighed every other week. Maybe if they hadn't been so rude it would have been picked up sooner.

Caitlin was forever leaning to one side in her pushchair and her highchair but we never thought any more of it and when it came to walking she would hold onto something and when a big gap came she'd let go and crawl again. We just thought she was being lazy but it could have been more. Someone pointed out to me one day that she looked as though she was limping when she walked so I watched her without her shoes on and she was on tiptoes on one foot BUT my dad walks like that and we assumed she got it from him. In the meantime she had her developmental check (which was just for speech and the other milestone checks).

It wasn't until she started nursery last year that everyone became concerned. I was getting phone calls from the school almost daily saying that she's fallen over and could I come and get her and we decided to get her to the doctors. A long time coming I know but we really didn't think there was anything wrong.

Anyway we saw a locum at our GP surgery and he got her to walk and checked her legs whilst she was on my lap with one leg either side of my knee. His response was it's just habit, tell her to stop doing it and try and get her some thick soled shoes so she won't be able to do it as easily!!! So we went home and months of me telling Caitlin to get off her tiptoes went by until one day she said to me 'I can't mummy it hurts'.

Well that was it I phoned the doctors to get an appointment and we saw a different locum. He didn't make me feel like I was wasting his time like most doctors now do. He made Caitlin walk round his office and then said strip her lower half off and lay her down on the bed. He walked over looked for about 5 seconds and said 'well her knees don't line up for starters and her right leg is definitely shorter. 'I'm going to refer you to the hospital'. That was in end of March.

By the end of April we still had no response from the hospital so I phoned the receptionist at the surgery. She said I could chase the hospital if I wanted and i thought no. It's your job you do it so I said I didn't have time could she do it. She phoned me back about half hour later to say the hospital never received a referral letter but she had faxed it over to them. It makes you sick doesn't it? In this day and age of modern technology it still takes a week to get blood test results back and they're still relying on snail mail to send referral letters!!!

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We eventually got an appointment through for 2nd June. We saw a lovely physio called Jennie and she went through all the possibilities and the treatment for them. Right near the end she said I do want to send Caitlin for an x-ray though just to rule out a dislocated hip. Well I just wasn't prepared for that. Me being me had looked up things it could be online and I don't think a hip dislocation was one of the possibilities. I broke down and Jennie said it was likely it wouldn't be.

Stu went in for the x-ray with her as we thought I may be pregnant and then we went back upstairs. Jennie called us in and said that it was dislocated. I was heartbroken. She told us of the surgeon that would do it and that we'd have to go to Margate to have it done. We went home and I just cried for what seemed like hours but I'm sure it wasn't. We met the surgeon Mr. Mark Cornell and he was lovely. Told us everything we needed to know and gave me his and Jennie's email address should we think of anything we forgot to ask so we didn't feel alone and they both suggested the STEPS website to us.

On 14th August 2008 Caitlin had an arthrogram, open reduction, and pelvic and femoral osteotomy on her right hip and thighbone and at the moment is in a spica from her nipples all the way down her right leg and half way down her left. Looking back the signs were all there but we didn't know about them. Would the steps hip health leaflet have helped? Yes I think it would have. Do I think they should change the newborn screening test? Absolutely. Especially as my consultant said it was a very faulty test.

So there you have it. Caitlin's story. and it's not over yet. We are back in hospital on 25th September for metalwork removal and cast change. Then she'll be in cast for another six weeks and hopefully the cast will come off and stay off on 6th November just in time for Christmas and then Caitlin will be starting school in January when she should have been starting this week with the rest of her friends from nursery.



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