



# angel TREE MISSION



## *The Bolling Family*

### **Battling: 3-year-old, Hayden**

In just a short few months, little Hayden has gone from a thriving, happy toddler who can no longer walk or talk.

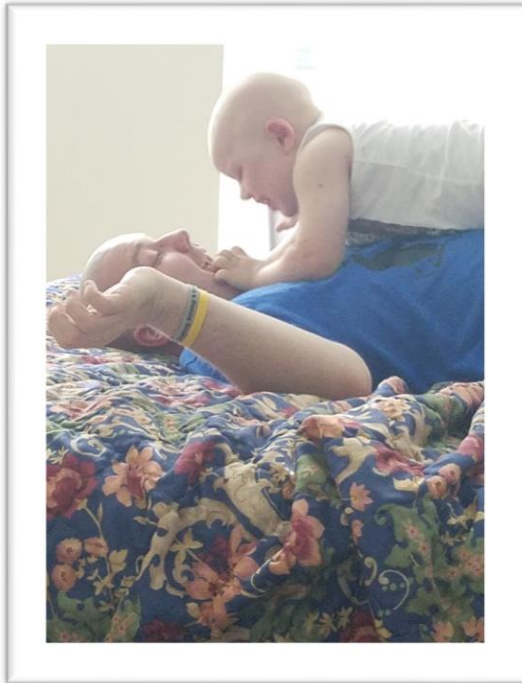
In March of this year, Hayden (age 3) began vomiting multiple times per day without an explanation as to why. His pediatrician thought it was a stomach bug and to let it “run its course”. Two weeks later, the vomiting continued. The pediatrician suggested he see a GI doctor and in the meantime, if he became lethargic or his vomiting worsened, they were

to take him to the ER to get fluids and labs. Hayden’s mom, Samantha (age 26), and his dad, James (age 28) had to take him to the ER twice, both times sent home and were told that Hayden probably had a vomiting syndrome. Shortly after, Hayden’s pediatrician asked them to bring him into the office first thing on April 11<sup>th</sup>. That morning was the morning that changed our lives completely.

They woke up super early so they could be at the doctor’s office by 8am but little Hayden wouldn’t stay away. When James tried to dress Hayden, he was unable to hold himself up and kept falling back asleep. They got in the car and headed to his appointment. Hayden’s head hung low. When Samantha would attempt to get him to take a drink from his sippy cup, he would lift his head, look around in a very confused state and hang his head back down. Something was not right. She took him out of his car seat and from that moment on, he became unresponsive. They drove straight to the ER.

As Hayden lay limp in Samantha’s arms, she screamed at the front desk for help. Hayden was rushed to the trauma unit where their little 3-year-old was immediately hooked up to tons of monitors and given an IV. James, Samantha, and her mom sat in fear as Hayden continuously made a loud moaning cry. As Samantha stepped out to get a nurse, both James and her mom were screaming for help! Hayden was having a seizure.

*COUNTINUED...*



After everything calmed down, they did a CT scan and found a mass on his brain. They were to be transferred to Texas Children's Hospital, over an hour and a half away. As they moved Hayden from his hospital bed to the EMS stretcher, Hayden flat-lined and CPR was performed to save his life.

Once they arrived at Texas Children's, Hayden was put in the PICU. The Neurosurgeon reviewed the CT scan and reported that the extensive amount of fluid buildup around his brain caused his seizure. The plan was to insert a drain to remove the fluid, then once enough fluid was extracted, he would perform another surgery to place a VP shunt in his head to permanently remove fluids. An MRI was performed to get a closer look at what they were dealing with. When the results came back, it was horrifying.

Hayden had 3 tumors on his brain; one on the brain stem and two on the cerebellum areas. He also had additional tumors along his spine, top to bottom. The

following morning, surgery was performed to remove the largest tumor (3cm) to conduct a biopsy. Results... cancer, Medulloblastoma.

The treatment plan was to have 6 weeks of radiation followed by 9 cycles of chemo. So far they have completed radiation and 2 cycles of chemo; he has around 7 months left to go. Hayden has endured multiple surgeries, including a feeding tube in his belly (G-Button), tumor removal, shunt placement, and a shunt revision.

Due to the complications, fluid and seizures, Hayden can no longer walk or talk and has suffered memory loss. He has basically reverted to being under the age of one. They didn't know how bad off he would get but claim Hayden's thriving for a kid on chemo! Over the past 7 months, he has gone from a terrifying vegetative state to being able to sit up, play, eat by mouth and speak a few words. He is currently in physical and occupational therapies and they have hope that he will walk and talk again!

Samantha & James are so proud of how far he has come and hope to see him thrive more and more. The Bolling family resides in Beaumont, TX and have been staying at the Ronald McDonald House since they were discharged from the hospital, where they will stay until chemo is complete. They will do anything it takes to get them on the road to recover and will not give up!!

"He is such a strong little boy and has touched the lives of many family, friends and even people who don't know us. We are all *Staying Strong For Hayden!!*" - Samantha Bolling

*This year we join together to help this family  
have a wonderful Christmas!*