Mia and Max making a difference for children with arthritis

Sunday 20 June, 2021

Juvenile Arthritis Research were amazed when they heard about 9 year old Mia's plans to raise awareness of juvenile arthritis and much-needed funds for the charity.

Mia has had juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) since she was three years old. JIA is an autoimmune condition – Mia's immune system, which is designed to fight off viruses, bacteria and infection, is attacking her joints. This causes pain, discomfort, fatigue, and reduced mobility. Mia also has inflammation inside the eye, called uveitis which affects one in 5 children with JIA.

Sometimes juvenile idiopathic arthritis can be an invisible condition and people don't see the daily struggles that children with arthritis face. As well as coping with the pain that their condition causes, there is a lot more to cope with too from medications (often as painful injections) and regular blood tests as well as a plethora of other tests, scans and x-rays. Then there are the side-effects of the medication which can be very unpleasant. Having a child with JIA in the family can be tough on all family members with so much time spent at appointments and getting to grips with a "new normality".

Having lived with JIA for 6 years Mia, along with her brother Max, decided to organise some fundraising activities to raise funds for Juvenile Arthritis Research. As well as guess the number of sweets in a jar and other activities, Mia and Max will be joined by their cousins for a sponsored bike ride. So far they have already raised an incredible £500. These vital funds will be used towards searching for a cure for juvenile arthritis, and awareness and support work. You can read more about Mia's story and support her fundraising at https://bit.ly/JARMiaMax

Mia's mum, Jo, says "It certainly has been a rollercoaster and I imagine the ride is far from over but she is taking it in her stride and makes us so proud every single day."

Richard Beesley, founder of Juvenile Arthritis Research explains "Awareness that children can get arthritis remains low and this can cause long delays in diagnosis. During that time, joints can become permanently damaged. We know that prompt diagnosis and treatment leads to far better outcomes for children with JIA. Mia and Max are doing an incredible job of telling people about JIA as well as raising funds to allow us to support more families affected by the disease."

If you have been inspired by Mia's story and want to make a difference in your community to raise awareness of JIA, please get in touch through our website, www.jarproject.org

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