Mum tackles Yorkshire 10km to thank charity that kept her at son's side

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A Mum whose little boy fought a rare brain condition is lacing up her trainers to raise money for the charity which kept them together during his treatment.

Jodie Dutchman, 27 from Huddersfield, will be completing the Bupa Great Yorkshire Run later this month with brother Tom, 22, to raise hundreds of pounds for The Sick Children's Trust. The charity, which provides 'Home from Home' accommodation at specialist children's hospitals, supported Jodie and Dad, Stephen, when their son Blake, now six-years-old, received lifesaving treatment at Sheffield Children's Hospital.

Blake needed specialist care when he had a rare reaction to a drug commonly used prior to bowel surgery to help treat inflammation. However, the drug caused inflammation on his brain – known as posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome – which in turn caused Blake's heart rate to drop, his blood pressure to rise and seizures. After spending roughly three months in Sheffield Children's Hospital – over an hour away from home – Blake was able to return home with his Mum and Dad. **Jodie says:**

"From his birth, we have been in and out of hospital with Blake for bowel surgery and blood transfusions. He needed to have a stoma and a peg fitted as he was born with gastroschisis. He seemed perfectly healthy up until last November when we noticed he was starting to show signs of serious anaemia which meant he needed further treatment: laser surgery for ulcers on his bowel. A few days afterwards, doctors noticed he had started to deteriorate and he underwent a CT scan and MRI to find out what was happening.

"We had no idea just how ill he was. If it wasn't for the staff spotting his symptoms it doesn't bear thinking about what could have happened – his condition is so rare that if they hadn't noticed, it could have been a lot worse for Blake.

"They said it was likely he had had an incredibly rare reaction to a drug which is commonly used to treat inflammation in the bowel for conditions such as crohns or colitis. It was a very worrying time, but fortunately enough we were supported by The Sick Children's Trust."

Since being discharged, Blake has been doing really well and returned to school this month. He regularly attends appointments at the clinic and still requires regular iron infusions, but is a young, energetic little boy enjoying life.

"It's so good to have him back home, but I do catch myself thinking about what we would have done had it not been for The Sick Children's Trust. Huddersfield is a while away from Sheffield, so when I was told we wouldn't be able to stay with Blake on the ward, my heart broke. Thankfully we were told about a 'Home from Home' located on the top floor of the hospital.

"The Sick Children's Trust's Treetop House helped me hugely. It was such a great help to have somewhere to go and wash my clothes, store and cook food and also get a few hours' sleep. Simple things like having a bath or a shower made such a difference – even if it was 2am."

Treetop House opened in 2001 and has 13 bedrooms so families can be close to their loved ones. It costs £28 per night to provide one family with one room. **House Manager, Ann Wyatt, says:**

"We wish Jodie and Tom all the best for the Yorkshire 10km. It will be a challenging run but we know they will do a fantastic job. It's so important that families continue to support us after they've gone home as we are completely reliant on donations – and what we provide to families is invaluable. So we'd like to say a huge thank you to the family for supporting us this month."

If you would like to support Jodie and Tom, please visit https://www.justgiving.com/jodie-dutchman/

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