



Lisa's Story

Our Family story is one of deep sadness, but it may help viewers of this website to realise how precious and wonderful life is, and that each day should be grasped with both hands.

There are many words to describe Lisa, bubbly, loving, caring to name but a few. People who knew Lisa, friends, family and work colleges were inspired by her infectious smile, her ability to warm all social gatherings and the fact that she never had a bad thing to say about anybody.

Lisa loved life she managed to accomplish many of her goals in her short time. She loved to travel and visited many places including, Japan, American, Canada and much of Europe.

Lisa was very family orientated, she had an extremely close bond with her mum Pam, they would talk each and every day on the phone chatting about the latest reality TV programmes and other bits of gossip. It was this close bond that pushed family to the top of Lisa's priorities, her main goal in life was to marry and have children.

In 2004 Lisa married James Liptrott whom she had known since primary school. They had the relationship that most people can only dream of, they were best friends some would say true soul mates. Lisa and James did everything together and only spent time apart when they both went off to different universities, even then they chose to commute instead of living on campus so that they could see each other at weekends and holidays.

In September 2006 her wish for a family came true with the arrival of Toby Edward Liptrott, this further cemented her relationship with James and an unbreakable family bond was created. Lisa adored her son and dedicated much of her time in raising Toby with all the love and affection she had felt in her own childhood years.

On the 17th May 2008 Lisa Liptrott sadly died of viral encephalitis aged only 28 years old. Lisa's story is one of tragedy, unanswered questions and most of all courage, which provided the inspiration of the LIVE Foundation.

We start the story in mid 2007 when Lisa discovered that a condition she fought in childhood called ITP had returned. ITP stands for Idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura and is the medical term for a low platelet count of unknown cause. In ITP antibodies coat the surfaces of the platelets, destroying them and causing their level to drop. After several trips to hospital and a series of strong steroids the condition showed no signs of abating so the doctors put forward 2 courses of action, spleen removal or a drug called Rituximab. Rituximab is normally used to treat Leukaemia but has had some recent success with ITP in the small number of cases where steroids were not sufficient.

Not an easy decision but spleen removal can severely compromise the immune system for life, and whilst Rituximab has a similar effect for a period of time it was felt by Lisa and the doctors to be lower risk. Long days of dialysis ensued and over a period of months the Rituximab did seem to have a positive affect. The ITP slowed down and Lisa's platelet count normalised.

Christmas 2007 came and went and whilst friends and family noticed Lisa was often tired and sometimes irritable this didn't seem unusual for a busy working mum with a young family. However, in the early part of 2008 it became apparent that Lisa was not only very tired but her balance and memory were not as they should be. She adored her family and most of all her son Toby but when she began to lose her ability to confidently care for him she realised she had to see a doctor. Very quickly this GP visit lead to a hospital appointment and examination by several senior consultants at the Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham and in February 2008 Lisa was admitted to the Neurology Ward.

Following admission Lisa bravely underwent a whole series of tests ranging from simple bloods and memory games, to painful Lumbar Punctures, CT's and MRI scans and eventually the most serious of all, a brain biopsy. All these tests were married with many different drug therapies as the doctors diligently, and eventually desperately attempted to discover what was causing Lisa's symptoms. Encephalitis was flagged early but none of the usual treatments had an affect, and whether the condition was viral or autoimmune related also remained unclear. In addition, a link with the earlier ITP condition and the Rituximab was explored. No conclusive evidence was produced but Rituximab

does affect the immune system and so procedures were carried out including plasma exchange to clean Lisa's blood of any residual affects of the drug.

Attempts to both diagnose and treat continued over the long anguish-filled 3 months which followed, and we as the family sat night and day hoping and praying for a breakthrough as Lisa's condition worsened. She fought hard and never without a smile even on the most difficult days when her temperature soared, but slowly her short-term memory disappeared and her long-term memory weakened. She lost all sense of balance and she became more confused; something bad had attacked or was still attacking her brain but no one knew what or how to stop it.

As we watched and held her hand through yet another painful test or treatment, we also desperately searched for other doctors, medical research, or drug trials which might offer a new avenue of hope.

We corresponded with several helpful and kind people across the globe, including medical experts and individuals who had been through similar experiences but ultimately to no avail. On Saturday 17th May at 6.00pm Lisa lost her fight for life after a 6-month struggle with Encephalitis, leaving behind a heartbroken family and a little boy who will never really know his mum.

The LIVE foundation was set up in Lisa's honour to recognise her bravery, and to raise awareness and funds for research into Encephalitis. For Lisa the doctors were unable to identify what caused her condition, a virus attack is thought most likely but why and how remain unknown. This situation is something the LIVE foundation wishes to change for others, and every penny you can help raise will go towards research to try and help bring us a medical step closer to saving others from a similar tragedy.