

NEXUS CHAMPION

BRYAN IVERSON



Bryan Iverson was a healthy, 15-year-old up until he was found unconscious at the gym. Doctors at an El Paso, Texas emergency room first thought he was dehydrated, but after he stopped breathing and had a seizure, they knew something more was wrong. A CT scan confirmed he had a severe brain bleed.

"We were all in shock," shared Michelle Mendez, Bryan's sister. **"The doctors said there were no signs of trauma, so they didn't know what caused the bleed to happen."**

After being transferred to a second hospital that same day, the brain bleed stopped — which is when doctors turned their attention to the pressure in his brain. Beating the odds, he survived surgery and through the night. To help his body recover, Bryan had a tracheostomy, was put on a ventilator, and had G-tube placed. He was in a coma over the course of three weeks.

"It was a miracle when Bryan woke up!" said Michelle. **"I would play music, read and talk to him, and tell him to fight for his life. Thankfully I was there to witness him wake up. The doctors asked him to follow commands, like blink twice and squeeze a hand, and he was doing it."**

It was during those three weeks after surgery that Bryan's doctor noticed a hemorrhage. At first, they waited to see if it would dissipate on its own and if he would even wake up, but it got to the point where another surgery had to happen to help Bryan continue to heal.

Michelle remembers the time that followed surgery, recalling Bryan being sedated and neurostorming, a typical response for severely brain injured individuals. But because his vitals were stable and his brain pressure was under control, his doctors said he was ready for rehabilitation at Nexus Children's Hospital.

"Bryan was awake, but in his own world. He wasn't talking or doing much besides kicking and hitting," said Michelle. **"We were excited for him to move to the next step. It was really hard to see Bryan like that."**



Once Bryan arrived at Nexus Children's Hospital, he started making improvements right away. Michelle explained, **"My mother went with Bryan and I would video call them every day. I literally saw improvements each day after he started rehabilitation. The therapies he performed really helped him."**

Rita Guillory, Respiratory Manager at Nexus Children's Hospital said, **"Bryan was fortunate to have a family that supported and encouraged him to participate in all aspects of his care. Although he admitted with a stable trach, Bryan faced challenges in managing his secretions. To help him maintain a good airway clearance, he worked through aggressive pulmonary therapy using cough assist, breathing treatments, and vest therapy. He always challenged himself to do more and more each day."**

"Bryan was so ready to breathe fully on his own that he actually pulled out his own trach. After the tubes were out, he started moving more and eating again. He eats even more now than before all of this happened!" said Michelle.

"The first hospitals we were at gave us worst case scenarios, so we were ready for the worst," said Michelle. **"We didn't expect him to get off the ventilator or trach but look at him now. When he came home, he was off everything and all his medications. He's doing so well and is really looking forward to starting school again."**

After a severe brain injury, an individual's personality can change. Michelle said the family is enjoying the new, talkative and funny Bryan.

"We tell him we like him better now, but really, we're just happy that he's made the progress he needed to and that he's home," shared Michelle.

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