

## Eric's Story

On September 22, 1993 our lives changed forever. Not only did we become first time parents, but we became parents of a critically ill baby boy. Our son Eric was born with an e.coli infection. He was transported to our local Children's Hospital where he was placed on a life saving device called ECMO. He remained on ECMO for two weeks and seemed to be doing well. That all changed early one morning when we got a call telling us that Eric had taken a turn for the worse and had been diagnosed with bacterial meningitis. About a week or so into the meningitis diagnosis, Eric suffered two strokes. One stroke affected 80-90% of his left hemisphere and the second stroke about 25% of the right hemisphere. Needless to say, we were devastated.



Eric survived the strokes and was discharged from the hospital. The strokes left him with a right hemiparesis and as we'd find out later, an intractable seizure disorder.

Eric's seizures started around the age of four. The most debilitating ones were caused by a form of reflex epilepsy called startle seizures. The startle seizures caused Eric to seize any time he heard a loud, unexpected noise. As the seizures progressed and medication after medication failed, we opted to do a trial of the Ketogenic Diet. Unfortunately, that failed too. It was then that we realized our only hope of controlling the seizures was a hemispherectomy. Eric underwent his hemispherectomy at the age of six. His hemispherectomy was preceded by a week of invasive monitoring. The hemispherectomy was a godsend as it stopped the startles that were causing him to seize so badly everyday. Eric is not seizure free but he is far better off than he was prior to his hemispherectomy. The surgery gave him a second chance at being a kid and leading a life without debilitating seizures. For that we will always be grateful.

Eric's parents