

Patient Spotlight – Jessica Ruch



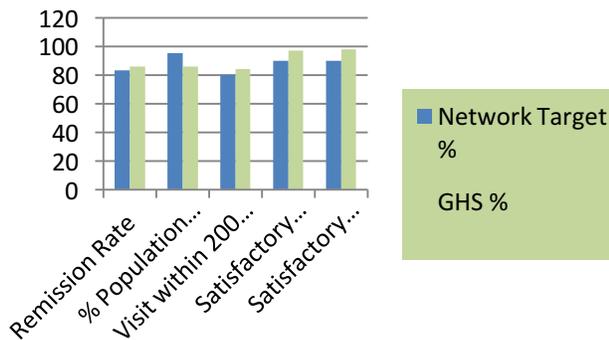
After many months of constantly being sick, tired, losing weight, and not growing as I should, coupled with numerous visits to my pediatrician, I was blessed to be referred to Dr. Markowitz, Pediatric Gastroenterology, and was quickly scheduled for diagnostic testing. I was diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis just a few months before my ninth birthday, too young to understand little, if any, of what this meant. I have had my share of ups and downs, especially in those first few years: Staying home from school more days than normal, feeling weak all the time, constant headaches, along with the typical symptoms of IBD. In that first year, I was either at Pediatric Gastroenterology or Pediatric Hematology once a week, trying out different medications, receiving iron treatments, Remicade treatments, or having labs drawn.

I was so happy to finally be able to play a sport my freshman and sophomore year in high school, which does not seem like much, but for me it was; however, I am mainly happy to have the energy to be successful in school and focus on my life outside this disease. I will be graduating high school this year with honors while dual enrolled as a freshman in college. I have reached the height I was meant to be, which was a concern, as I was so tiny for so long. I still have flares and take medicine, but I am learning to self-monitor my diet and rest when I need to so I can enjoy life and achieve my future goals. I am very fortunate to have Dr. Markowitz and his nurses to help me not just with the physical aspect of the disease, but also the emotional aspect of a chronic illness for my family and me.



IMPROVECARENOW

Improved Care Now is a collaborative community where patients, parents, clinicians & researchers work together to improve the health and care of children & youth with IBD.



Provider Spotlight – Dr. Markowitz

Dr. Jonathan Markowitz is a pediatric gastroenterologist at Patewood Memorial Children's Hospital. He completed his undergraduate at the College of William and Mary, followed by medical school at the University of South Carolina-Columbia. Both his residency in pediatrics and fellowship in gastroenterology were completed at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where he also earned a master's degree in clinical epidemiology at the University of Philadelphia.

Dr. Markowitz came to Prisma Health in 2006, where he served as associate program director for pediatric residency programs until 2009. In 2009, he took over as division chief of pediatric gastroenterology, which allowed him to transition to his current role as vice chair of academics in 2018. His primary research interest is eosinophilic esophagitis. He has published extensively and lectured nationally and internationally on the subject and has developed a multidisciplinary center for treating the condition that includes an onsite coordinator/dietitian and psychologist.





FAMILY FUN DAY - On April 6th, IBD patients and their families gathered with GHS Pediatric Gastroenterology staff for an afternoon of bowling fun at Wade Hampton Lanes. It was a great opportunity for patients and their families to meet and interact with one another.

GET CONNECTED

Check out the ICN
 Website: improvecarenow.org
 Parents - send an email to
parents@improvecarenow.org

What's Happening

- **MAKE A DIFFERENCE! JOIN US!** Monthly ImproveCare Now meetings at the clinic -- second Friday of each month at Noon. Help make a difference in the lives of children with IBD –Open Invitation!
- **Power of 2 Program** – Interested in peer-to-peer support? Not finding a support group in your area? Power of 2 is a peer-to-peer program for individuals seeking to talk by phone to other patients or caregivers with IBD. Learn more: email powerof2@crohnscolitisfoundation.org or call 888-694-8872 x 8
- Your feedback is welcome
- Please let us know how we can serve your family's needs



IBD Nutrition Class

When: First Friday of each month/ 8:30am
 Where: Pediatric Gastroenterology office

Led by Peds GI Dietician Kristan Brown
 Due to limited space, please contact the clinic at 864-454-5125 for reservation

Excellent resource for newly diagnosed IBD patients and those who need a refresher.

Topics Include:

- What to eat during a flare and remission
- Meal preparation/planning tips
- Vitamin and mineral supplementation
- IBD Diets
- Self-Management

