

## A Farm Girl with Tremendous Courage

### Mary's Story



---

*“Many times she would take out her IV when no one was looking and try to drink the sweet glucose.”*

---

— Jennifer Wise

Six year old Mary Wise has big, bright, brown eyes and a bubbly smile that makes you want to melt the minute she steps into the room. Little Mary is the 5th generation growing up on her family's cotton and soybean farm in Lake Providence, Louisiana. This is the perfect place for Mary's strong-willed, bright, creative personality! Her mother Jennifer said, “From the time Mary was born, she never was the sweet little, sit around, kind of girl, thank goodness for the wide open spaces.”

Mary enjoys spending time petting and grooming her two horses, Zeb and Shorty. Being too little to hop up in the saddle yet, she settles for riding on the lawnmower with her mom, and pretending it is her horse. Mary is in love with her German Shepherd, Rosie, who has even given her a few litters of pups. In addition, no farm would be complete without many cats; at last count, Mary thought she had seen 5.

This 5th generation farm girl has not had it easy. The first year and a half of Mary's life consisted of constant stomach pain, vomiting, earaches and asthma, yet her spirit persisted. Her little body struggled to fight off any virus; a constant compromise to her immune system. She quickly became dehydrated and required hospitalization for intravenous fluids. Hard for anyone to handle, Mary, at 18 months was full of questions and spirit. Her mom, Jennifer, said, “Many times she would take out her IV when no one was looking and try to drink the sweet glucose.” They learned quickly that this little spitfire needed one eye watching her at all times.

In the fall of 2006, at 1 ½ years old, Mary was eating lunch, when she began to scream in unbearable pain. At first her mom thought she might have been bitten by a spider. While checking her daughter for bites, Jennifer watched her daughter pass a kidney stone. It was as sharp as glass and the size of a kernel

# OHF Patient Stories

of corn. Due to a family history of kidney stones, Jennifer knew something was wrong. She raced Mary to their local rural medical center where they were able to remove a piece of a much larger stone that was still lodged in her kidney. The pain that Mary endured that day will forever be imbedded in Jennifer's memory.

Jennifer then did what any parent would do; she took Mary to LSU hospitals in Monroe and Shreveport, but neither had the equipment to take care of Mary. The third hospital, Willis-Knighton, performed surgery to remove the large stone, but did not get it all, which meant Mary had to have another surgery. The next surgery was successful; they flushed Mary's kidneys leaving them perfectly clean.

What happened next was unbelievable! Just two weeks later, her kidneys were full of stones! Mary's "Knight" in shining armor, a Nurse Practitioner, named Joe Knight, realized this was more than just kidney stones and recommended they travel to

Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital in Jackson, Mississippi. Jennifer credits and is grateful to, Joe Knight, his sense of urgency saved Mary's kidneys.

Timing is everything. Three hospitals, 3 surgeries and many prayers later, Jennifer met Dr. Baliga at Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital. Dr. Baliga had diagnosed another child a year before with Primary Hyperoxaluria and after much testing for Mary, on her 2nd birthday, was diagnosed with Primary Hyperoxaluria Type 1 (PH1). Jennifer was relieved to know what was wrong with Mary, but devastated by what she learned might be in Mary's near future.

The Oxalosis and Hyperoxaluria Center at the Mayo Clinic has been a miracle component in treating Mary's disease. Dr. Baliga bases all of his treatment decisions for Mary, on the expertise of the doctors at there. All of her blood work and treatment protocol comes exclusively through Doctor Milliner and Doctor Monico, both at the

Mayo Center for Hyperoxaluria. The great news is that Mary has not passed a stone since the initial surgeries to remove what was in her kidneys, her diagnosis of PH1 and early treatment. She is responsive to a protocol of vitamin B6 and lots and lots of water.

Mary no longer suffers from stomach viruses and constant infections now that her kidneys are functioning normally. As a parent, Jennifer wants all who have small children with PH to know, it has been the little things along the way that help keep them going. She never knew how exciting it could feel to find out about a pill crusher for Mary's meds, or Pedialyte<sup>®</sup> that helped Mary regain her weight, as well as maintain her fluids.

Jennifer said, "The Oxalosis and Hyperoxaluria Foundation helps us in so many ways." She checks the website often to get updates on the latest research and what is happening for her daughter's future. The Wise family uses The Oxalate Count Food List and the

## A Farm Girl with Tremendous Courage

### Mary's Story

---

*“Knowledge is power, and the OHF and Dr. Baliga have helped me become the expert on my child’s disease. Without this help and knowing about the OHF funded center at Mayo, we may still be traveling from hospital to hospital.”*

---

– Jennifer Wise

Oxalate Cookbook, which they found online at [www.ohf.org](http://www.ohf.org). It gave Mary much more variety in her diet and helps keep her oxalate levels down.

What gives Jennifer hope for Mary, is seeing the improvements since her initial diagnosis in thanks to the OHF supported Oxalosis & Hyperoxaluria Center at Mayo Clinic and their treatments for PH. She is also impressed with the OHF funded, International Patient Registry allowing researchers and scientists to determine trends in treatment protocols and make necessary changes quickly. Jennifer said, “because of these things Mary’s disease is under better control today.”

This summer she would like to put on a driveway children’s musical. Mary shows signs of being musically inclined, as she already enjoys the harmonica and is learning to play the keyboard. These talents along with her ballet and constant singing around the house are per-

fect for the little girl who always wants to be the center of attention. Watch out Broadway, here comes Mary Wise!

Jennifer would like to thank The Elmwood Baptist Church community and her family for all of their love and support these last few years. Jennifer said, “Knowledge is power, and the OHF and Dr. Baliga have helped me become the expert on my child’s disease. Without this help and knowing about the OHF funded center at Mayo, we may still be traveling from hospital to hospital.”

Jennifer is a member of the newly developed OHF Patient Advisory Board (PAB), because she wants to ensure that through her efforts, a cure is found for Mary and all of those suffering from PH around the world.

To hear more about Mary’s journey, you may reach out to her mom Jennifer Wise on line at [www.OHF.org](http://www.OHF.org) and follow the link to OHF Talk.