

Seth Grimm's Story:

My journey has been exciting so far. Four years ago at Abbott NW I arrived into the arms of my parents. My parents and grandparents alike held all the joyful hopes and dreams that every child should have. Alas, my face turned blue and I was scurried over to Children's to figure out why—they worried a lot. Little did they know that I had a rare complicated heart consisting of transposition of the greater arteries with a large VSD, significant pulmonary valve stenosis and small pulmonary venous return. So I spent the first 4 weeks of my life in the NICU while the Doctors took x-rays and put tubes down my nose. Finally, they decided to put a hole between the chambers of my heart. On top of that, I had a pyloric stenosis taken care of in those first eventful weeks. Members of my home team visited me every chance they could get. Holding me was a challenge due to all the tubes and diagnostic sensors connected to me. They rose to the challenge. Pretty soon I got well enough to go home for a while.

My little heart beat fast that first year. I sweat a lot when I slept. Nursing was hard for me and I didn't like nooks and pacifiers. I could be a happy baby, but I've been blessed with a discriminating pallet—those around me say I'm a fussy eater. However, I was so close to normal even my first pediatricians couldn't tell I had a big plumbing problem with heart by just looking at me.

September, after my third birthday, the big open heart operation took place. Doctor Overman did a nice Nikiadoh procedure on my heart, and Warden which took eight hours. My discharge papers look like a doctoral thesis that I may not understand until I am in college. The team didn't know I have a blood complication called Factor 7. This slowed down my recovery. I spent five days in a medical coma and five weeks in the hospital until I could come home. One of my favorite movies is the Wizard of Oz. I like The Tin Man, who needed a heart, mine was broken and needed to be fixed. I got home in time to go out with Mommy, Daddy, Papa and Nanna, trick or treating in my Tin Man Costume.

Soon I was well enough to return to preschool, because I have so many good friends there, I like my teachers too. I took a lot of diuretics and this meant I had to wear pull-ups even when most kids don't have to. Diuretics didn't help my occasionally temperamental and demanding nature.

Around my 4th birthday, I didn't have a lot of extra energy and my heart rate was as low as 54 BPM. So for three weekends in July, I was in the hospital. The doctors saw an artery was too small during the first week. The next week they fixed that with a balloon angioplasty, and in fourth weekend they put in a pacemaker.

That pacemaker really did the trick. My base heart rate is now 80 BPM. I can go all day long—sometimes I need a nap. I can run and play with Nanna's puppy dog Sophie. It's a toss-up who will tire out first. Even though most kids don't go back to preschool so soon after receiving a pacemaker, I pleaded with my parents and the doctors let me go back to school after two weeks of recovery. I'm happy there and my parents are too. They say it helps keep me on a regular schedule. I'm very curious about life, ask many questions and wonder "what would happen if" a lot. I like preschool mostly because I'm people person at heart.

