

# The Theresa Illicete Family

Theresa, the youngest of 11 children, was doted upon by everybody in her family. At nine years old, she was a fun-loving, inquisitive and very energetic child, yet. In August 2014, Theresa began complaining of leg pain after playing with her brothers. The pain would come and go, but in September, Theresa was taken to the hospital where she was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma in her right femur, and the cancer had spread to her lungs. The doctor told her family that Theresa had a 30 percent chance of surviving.

During treatment, Theresa's tumors were not responding to standard therapy. Doctors at Penn State Children's Hospital knew they needed to take a different approach and enrolled Theresa in a personalized medicine study. During this study, doctors removed and analyzed Theresa's tumors and matched them to more than 200 different drugs that could affect her tumors. Because of this personalized approach, doctors found that a unique surgery would be the best treatment option.

They were able to remove part of Theresa's leg and attach her ankle joint to her knee while still maintaining joint function. Theresa's surgery was a success, helping her maintain quality of life and continue doing some of the things she loves with the support of a prosthetic.

In 2019, Theresa is 13 years old and still conquering her cancer. Theresa's mother Mary credits Penn State Children's Hospital and Four Diamonds for the research that ultimately saved Theresa's life. "People should know about the good they are doing at Hershey. They really are amazing."

Theresa's physician, Dr. Valerie Brown, says, "**Funding from Four Diamonds has saved children's lives and will definitely save children's lives in the future. Every dollar matters because there is still more work to do.**"

