

AYLA ZUMWALT: Moving Forward

After an exhausting day, most people long for the simple joy of sitting down and relaxing.

However, Ayla Zumwalt a 20-year-old O & P Design patient says, "I never thought I'd say it, but I'm tired of sitting." Having to be dependent on her motorized wheelchair for over a year now, it's understandable why.

On December 24, 2008, Ayla, who was a thriving teen born with no physical handicap, had her life turned upside down.



A tragic car accident threatened her life, leaving family and friends wondering if she'd survive her injuries. What's more, Ayla suffered a brain injury on the operating table during one of her initial life-saving surgeries. She was left completely paralyzed, only able to communicate with friends, family, and therapists by blinking her eyes. But she was alive.

Two months after her accident, in February of 2009, Ayla began intense physical therapy. Communication through blinking turned to communication through arm movement, and as she regained her speech,

she was even better able to work with her therapists and orthotists to make progress.

Static progressive stretching AFOs were the first braces Ayla was fitted for at O & P Design. They stretched her severely contracted ankle so that she could transfer and stand. According to Ayla, "Those were my least favorite, but I'm still thankful I had them." It was all part of a bigger puzzle. She was able to progress and move on to a static progressive knee brace, in conjunction with a KAFO for walking.

Currently, her only lower extremity orthosis is her solid ankle AFO. She says it's her favorite by far and that she appreciates the light weight design features of her braces during exhausting physical therapy sessions.

Today, on top of being able to stand, to transition herself from position to position, and to complete rigorous hours of physical therapy, she says she's walking just shy of 1,000 feet.

"Sometimes it's hard to tell if I'm making progress or not," she says. "It depends on the day." The steps speak for themselves though, in how undeniable Ayla's strides truly are.

In keeping a remarkably positive attitude about her therapy, her bracing, and her new life, Ayla says her next goal is to get out of the chair completely. A once-paralyzed teen is working her way towards an active, energetic lifestyle without limitations!

Volume 3 • Issue 1 • 2010



Page 2:
Hands for Haiti



Page 3:
Fighting Back:
Post-Stroke
Recovery

Hands for Haiti

In the wake of the January 12 earthquake in Haiti, countries all over the world responded with sympathy, sadness, and an urge to help. Money and relief efforts poured in, everyone scrambling to help in some way.

The Ellen Meadows Prosthetic Hand Foundation and Odyssey Teams have recently discovered a way to give a helping hand.

The two companies have joined together to create the “Odyssey Teams Helping Hands for Haiti” program, which will build and distribute (free of charge) the Ellen Meadows Foundation LN-4 and LN-4A prosthetic hands to Haitians who are in need of them. Odyssey Team’s original Helping Hands Program has gifted prosthetic hands to more than 2,000 people in developing countries, and is anxious to start work in Haiti.

Lain Hensley, COO and co-founder of Odyssey Teams and a board member of the Ellen Meadows Prosthetic Hand Foundation is learning just how serious the need for prostheses is becoming in Haiti. The numbers are piling up, from injuries in which someone’s hand has been crushed, resulting in amputation, to amputation necessary because of infections.

Because of the number of amputees, he hopes to start production of the prosthetic hands as soon as possible and to begin giving them to victims by the end of the year.

“It’s amazing what giving someone a hand, literally giving them a hand, will do,” Hensley said. “I’ve heard stories of children and adults who have gone into isolation after losing a hand due to a tragedy. And when they receive a new prosthetic, the light goes on. They go from being a shell of a person to being whole again.”

Thomas Calvot, HI’s disability and emergency advisor, though grateful for the outpour of aid from other nations, insists that there are still major challenges facing the country. “The international community has shown overwhelming enthusiasm for providing prosthetic devices, but orthotic care is far more needed,” says Calvot.

This dynamic illustrates the importance of holistic care and communication amongst therapists, orthotists, and prosthetists. When working together, even in catastrophic environments, the lives of patients improve.



THE ELLEN MEADOWS PROSTHETIC HAND FOUNDATION

Learn how to support the LN-4 Project -
“Helping Hands for Haiti.”

Visit www.LN-4.org

Donate \$50 for one LN-4 hand – change the life of
another person

Subscribe to the LN-4 Newsletter

Share LN-4 video and information with your friends

Fighting Back: Post-Stroke Recovery

Stroke, also known as cerebrovascular accident (CVA) is the third leading cause of death in the United States. Killing 144,000 each year, it is also the leading cause of serious, long-term adult disability.

However, not all is lost when suffering a stroke. Once patients are medically stable, recovery, rehabilitation, and orthotic treatment can begin.

Mike Dailey and the team of orthotists at **O & P Design** have first hand experience working with recovering stroke victims. With the use of Ankle Foot Orthoses (AFOs) in conjunction with prescribed physical therapy treatments, patients are able to reach goals and make great progress.

According to American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association (AOPA), “Generally, subjects report that AFOs improve their walking and are comfortable.” AOPA also reported that, “Studies generally indicate that gait symmetry improves with AFO use compared to walking without orthoses,” and “There is also some suggestion that non-



articulated AFOs decrease the energy cost of gait compared to walking without orthoses.” An AFO used along side physical therapy can increase walking distance, stability and assist in transferring. Though braces are sometimes cumbersome, **O & P Design** offers multiple light weight materials and ultra-trim designs which can accommodate our patients’ particular needs.

All of O & P Design’s AFOs are fabricated on site and custom fit to the patient. Mike has worked long and hard perfecting the function of our AFOs. Working closely with our in-house technicians, he is able to insure the patients’ understanding of the brace, as well as its fit and function.

The world of orthotics is continuously being studied in an attempt to ever evolve and grow. Specifically regarding stroke victims, therapists and orthotists are working together to help stroke patients regain function and live healthy, productive lives.

Stroke Prevention

According to the National Stroke Association (NSA), 80% of all strokes are preventable.

Learn how to stay low-risk and out of harm’s way.

Though you should always consult your doctor before beginning any official regimen, here are some easy tips from the NSA to help keep you healthy:

- Know your blood pressure.
- Find out if you have atrial fibrillation.
- If you smoke, stop.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
- Find out if you have high cholesterol.
- If you are diabetic, monitor your blood-glucose levels.
- Exercise.
- Enjoy a lower sodium (salt), lower fat diet.
- Get checked for circulatory problems.
- Know the Symptoms of Stroke.

Once a stroke occurs though, it is important to act fast.

Most significant brain damage can be avoided if adult stroke victims are treated within a three-hour “golden window”.

Once symptoms start occurring, it is imperative that medical attention is immediately sought. Anything from sudden numbness or weakness, confusion, difficulties with speaking or understanding, trouble with walking, balance, coordination, or severe headaches can indicate that the body is falling victim to stroke.

Two million brain cells die every minute during a stroke, increasing the risk of permanent brain damage, disability, or death.

Know your risk of stroke and be proactive in staying healthy. Prevent what you can, and be prepared for what you can’t.

If you are already a stroke victim and are interested in an orthotic consultation with O & P Design, please give one of our offices a call.



***Have a Safe
and
Enjoyable Summer!***

ORTHOTIC
& PROSTHETIC
DESIGN

P.O. Box 444
Ballwin, MO 63022
(314) 535-5359

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BALLWIN, MO
PERMIT #14

Return Service Requested

Please Visit our Website:
www.OandPdesign.com

TO COMMENT ON THESE STORIES OR TO SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER CONTACT US AT:

info@OandPdesign.com or (314) 535-5359

**St. Louis Patient
Care Center**

5467 Highland Park Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63110
(314) 535-5359

**West County Patient
Care Center**

Woodsmill Center
14384 S. Outer 40 Rd.
Town & Country, MO 63017
(314) 542-9470

**St. Peters Patient
Care Center**

142 Jungermann Rd.
St. Peters, MO 63376
(636) 936-8111