



**Katlin  
Watts**

*Age 13*

# North Carolina

**Levine Children's Hospital**  
Sickle Cell Anemia, Asthma

Katlin Watts, 13, of Indian Trail, N.C., has a spirited personality and contagious smile that light up a room. No one would ever know behind that smile she experiences pain as a result of sickle cell anemia—an inherited disease where red blood cells function abnormally and cause small blood clots to form. These blood clots cause recurrent painful episodes called “pain crises.” Katlin also suffers from asthma, which complicates sickle cell; an attack can trigger a pain crisis, ultimately putting Katlin in the hospital.

Typically Katlin experiences three to four pain crises a year. Recently she was hospitalized at Levine Children's Hospital for six weeks due to a pain crisis. Since then she has been receiving monthly blood transfusions that have helped decrease the number of pain crises. Unfortunately sickle cell restricts blood flow, which has led to the depletion of Katlin's hipbone. Katlin is currently waiting for a hip replacement and has been using crutches for nearly a year.

Katlin doesn't allow her sickle cell or asthma to get in the way of living a full and fun life. She loves to swim and dance and she dreams of becoming a judge or psychologist.

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