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LIFE

## 'Incredible, unwavering spirit': Memorial fundraiser supports research on child brain tumours

Tal Esther Doron's family shares girl's story

By Simone Joseph Thornhill Liberal



Vaughan resident Kim Doron is raising money for pediatric brain tumor research after losing her daughter, Tali, to a rare brain tumor. - Kim Doron photo

Tal (also known as 'Tali') was born on June 10, 2003 — 27 minutes after her twin brother, Noam.

Her brother Amir is two and a half years older.

The first three years of Tali's life were somewhat uneventful.

But then in the summer of 2006, Tali began feeling sick, throwing up repeatedly for several days and then seemingly recovering as any child would from a simple virus.

By late October, she had also started feeling extremely lethargic. Her condition worsened and she ended up being rushed to the Hospital for Sick Children.

A CT scan determined that she had a large mass in her brain.

"This devastating news became our new reality. Our Tali had a brain tumour," said her parents Kim Doron and Ori Doron on website [talisfund.org](http://talisfund.org).

Tali had surgery to remove the tumour and then was already singing her ABCs in the recovery room. A biopsy revealed Tali had a tumour known as ATRT (atypical teratoid rhabdoid tumour), an extremely rare and aggressive form of cancer.

Tali had multiple surgeries aimed at stabilizing her very serious condition to prepare her for treatment (chemotherapy). Doctors warned that the treatment would cause Tali to feel extremely sick, and despite treatment, there remained a significant chance of relapse within the first year.

Tali's treatment consisted of six cycles of chemotherapy.

After each cycle, Tali had a stem cell transplant to help rebuild her immune system.

Tali's recovery after each cycle was so good that, on a number of occasions, she was allowed to go home for a few days. In mid-December, Tali recovered enough to go home on her father's birthday.

In February, she was home celebrating her brother Amir's birthday.

"Tali found a way to make the best of her difficult circumstances. She demonstrated strength and determination, and remained quite a happy little girl," according to her parents on [talisfund.org](http://talisfund.org).

After more than five months in hospital, Tali was finally discharged on March 30, 2007.

From April to early August, Tali thrived, surpassing all expectations.

Another MRI in May yielded encouraging results. "She was doing so well that we dared to hope that she might be that one child who could perhaps beat the odds," her parents said. She gained weight, had chubby little legs that showed increasing agility and strength. Her hair began to grow back, and her parents cautiously considered the possibility of Tali returning to school in the fall.

But then, in early August 2007, Tali began to experience stomach and neck pain. A CT scan and MRI confirmed the worst of her family's fears: Tali had suffered a severe relapse. The degree of spread was significant and there were no further treatment options available. Grief-stricken and in a state of shock and disbelief, her parents brought her home to be with loved ones.

Tali's condition deteriorated rapidly, and just three weeks later, she died with her heartbroken parents by her side.

"Having to manage such indescribable suffering at such a young age, Tali revealed herself as a most exceptional, unique, and inspiring human being," according to her parents. "Her incredible, unwavering spirit provided us with the energy and strength we needed to help her get through each day."

Tal Esther Doron was only four years old when she died.

Tali's mother, Vaughan resident Kim Doron, co-founded Tali's Fund to raise awareness and funds for pediatric brain tumour research. An online Tali's Fund fundraising event will be held Sept. 30 at 8 p.m. It is a 3 Stars Connect event. (3 Stars Connect events bring awareness to causes that reflect strength, hope and unity through music and dance).

Tali's mother will also be performing a song that was written for Tali. To link to the show, go to <https://3starsconnect.ca/>. If you can't make it that night, the showcase and voting platform will be online for an additional 48 hours.

For more about Tali's Fund, please visit <https://talifund.org/>.



**Simone Joseph**

*Simone Joseph covers King Township and business stories. She loves spending time with her two daughters and husband. She also loves being out in nature, hiking, swimming and taking zumba/aerobics classes.*