

I started to notice that I was having pain after eating in January of 2010. Over the next six months I acquired many more symptoms: fatigue, worsening pain, nausea, heartburn, weight loss, bleeding, joint pain and nightly fevers. A few months later, after doctor's visits, blood work, scopes and more tests I was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease on June 29th.

I started medicine, and within a few weeks I was feeling somewhat better. Within a few months I had gained back most of the weight I had lost, and felt more energetic. By the time I started school in September, I was in remission. I stayed in remission for a few months, with only Pentasa and diet. But then my symptoms returned, and blood work the week before Thanksgiving confirmed that I was out of remission. Before starting a new treatment I had a precautionary liver biopsy, and in February of 2011 I was diagnosed with a related autoimmune disease of my liver. I missed over 40 days of school last year while trying to figure out a good treatment, and had to take a medical leave of absence from school.

In the past year and a half I have tried various diets, Pentasa, antibiotics, probiotics, supplements, two kinds of steroids, immunosuppressants, Remicade and enteral nutrition. Last year I had surgery to have a G-tube placed in my stomach for enteral feeds. At the moment I am taking 35 pills a day, and not yet in remission. I am on Pentasa, Remicade and Prednisone and I am using a G tube for enteral feeds as a supplement. I also may add 6mp soon.

You can check out my CaringBridge page:

<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/isabellelinguiti> if you want more information. It is a blog that I started to keep my friends and family up-to-date about my health.

I go to Germantown Friends School and I am in 11th Grade. I volunteer at a children's hospital, play softball, and sing in my high school's choir. I also have a job working in a pre-school, which I really enjoy! When I grow up, I want to be a pediatric gastroenterologist.

Last summer I went to Camp Oasis and had an amazing time! I am dealing with my illness so much better after meeting other kids who are dealing with the same things.

I have been a Team Challenge participant for two seasons, and have met so many amazing people. I urge you to join Team Challenge for a great time and a way to help end the suffering of many people with IBD. Life isn't always easy when dealing with IBD, especially in high school, but knowing that there are so many people fighting for a cure gives me hope.