

It's now 11:55 pm on our first night together in the apartment since December 28, 1999. I am thanking God for giving me this night with my child as I realize the memorable road that we have just traveled.

Since Michael's diagnosis in October 1997, I have known every medication he was getting and why. I knew the reactions, and side effects. That way, when problems occurred, I knew what was happening and what could happen. As a result, our lives were easier in some respects.

The other day, someone said to me that parents were scared listening to "horror stories" about other children. I had to stop them, these are not horror stories, these are FACTS. Facts about what can happen to these children. The most important thing "You" have to remember is that each child is **different**. Remember that this story happened to another child, not yours. **Listen and learn**. If you don't listen, how will you learn about the signs?

You are your child's advocate. **Speak up**. If you notice something doesn't seem right, do not wait until it might be too late. Every minute counts. The nurses and doctors will listen to you; they know you know your child best. Trust yourself. Trust the staff--on some level, they understand what you are going through, that is why they are here and continue to research better ways to help our children fight.

Keep faith that your God will not give you more than you can handle.

-- Jane, Duke PBMT Parent