



Fighting for a future free from the fear of bowel disease - Toby's story

At just six years old, Toby was diagnosed with Peutz-Jeghers Syndrome (PJS), a very rare polyposis syndrome that is usually inherited, although it can occur spontaneously. People with PJS develop polyps throughout the gut (anywhere between the mouth and the anus) which have the potential to cause fatal blockages and become cancerous.

Toby has undergone dozens of operations to monitor and remove polyps. At least two of these planned and emergency operations have been life-saving.

In December 2017, Toby underwent a seven hour operation which involved the removal of four polyps, the longest one measuring 4.5cm. Toby's mum, Rachel, explains: *'St Mark's assembled a team of world leaders in this specialist field to perform the most difficult and precise surgery on Toby, doing everything they could to avoid open surgery which is associated with several complications, including death. It was only later that they told us how worried they had been for Toby.'*



It's a family affair at St Marks

Toby recently celebrated his fifteenth birthday and, by way of thanks, Rachel completed a half marathon with family friend, Justine, and raised more than £850. Rachel's motivation was simple:

*'I owe my son's life to St Mark's and his amazing team of surgeons and support staff....In addition to looking after his physical health, the team takes great care to ensure he is mentally prepared to manage his condition as he gets older. There are no words to thank them for the way they look after Toby and our family. I don't know where we would be without St Mark's. Toby is now a big, strapping lad of 6'2" and is enjoying a full, happy and healthy life. **Toby's team has looked after him for the past nine years and they know him inside and out – literally!**'*



The fight is on

St Mark's, the national bowel hospital, is dedicated to fighting for a future free from the fear of bowel disease. **St Mark's Hospital is for bowels what Great Ormond Street Hospital is for children.**

St Mark's was the world's first specialist bowel hospital dedicated to the treatment of colorectal and intestinal diseases. The culture of education and commitment to developing new and more effective treatments remains as strong today as when the Hospital was founded in 1835.

St Mark's Hospital Foundation funds research, training and education enabling our world leading doctors to develop novel treatments and research-driven services to help bowel disease patients.

Toby is not alone in having been looked after by St Mark's for several years; many of our patients have had long associations with the Hospital. Patients are treated as individuals and we recognise the importance of psychological wellbeing as much as improved physical health. This approach combined with consistency of care sustains a bond for life.

We are committed to improving the lives of people living with bowel disease and we hope you will join us in our mission.



We hope you will support us so that we can help more people like Toby.

Yours sincerely,



Jason Bacon
Chief Executive

On behalf of the many thousands of people who wish to see a future free from the fear of bowel disease.

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Thank you for helping us towards a future free from the fear of bowel disease.

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