



ENCEPHALITIS411.ORG

FIGHTING ENCEPHALITIS HEAD ON!™

Nicole Seiler was a gregarious, fiercely independent 12-year old in 2010. At Holmes Middle School in Northridge, she had lots of friends who joked that you rarely saw Nicole. Nikki they called her without a Dr. Pepper in her hand and the teachers loved her too.



INVISIBLE ENEMY AMONGST US

She was participating in a book reading challenge that year in school, battle of the Books, trying to read more books than her classmates in a friendly and educational competition.

Nicole was involved in many of the same activities that her peers were such as Girl Scouts, gymnastics and dance at Center State and soccer at the AYSO of Sherman Oaks. But unlike many her age, Nicole also took on more mature responsibilities, such as babysitting and leading kindergartners in camp JCA in Malibu. She even volunteered or rather, insisted on doing all the planning and coordination for the B'nai Mitzvah for her twin brother Michael and herself a pretty big party to plan for someone of any age. But she's undaunted in working out every last detail from attire to location, menu, and all the magic that will make these twins' milestone one to cherish forever.

So it's a Tuesday and Nicole is anxiously planning the B'nai Mitzva. But as she's sitting in her green- and purple-colored room that she enjoyed decorating, this little girl doesn't feel so well. Her flu-like symptoms slow down her typical lively pace. A doctor

diagnoses her with a virus but gives her a round of antibiotics just in case. On Wednesday, Nicole is feeling no better but stubbornly plows through the symptoms.

But now it's Thursday, and Nicole is on the couch trying her best to beat the virus. Suddenly, she goes into seizures, rolling off the couch. Paramedics rush her to the hospital. The seizures are unstoppable, her strong body unable to fight off whatever it is that has gripped her.

On Friday doctors diagnose her with encephalitis swelling of the brain. The cause is unknown, which makes treatment more difficult. Her parents, twin brother Michael, sister Michelle, and rabbi are in shock as the horror unfolds, robbing Nicole of her of life, devastating the family. And just days later, 750 of her fans—family, friends, teachers, coaches, teammates and children, gather to honor the life of this well-loved girl who at only 12, impacted so many lives.

If you've never heard of encephalitis, it is inflammation of the brain that results in a brain injury due to swelling. The effects are similar to stroke, concussion and traumatic brain injury. In most cases its effects are permanent and lifelong. Roughly 20,000 Americans are impacted by

encephalitis annually. What makes it dissimilar to other brain injuries is that there are no predictive factors. Encephalitis can unexpectedly strike anyone, anytime, anywhere, at any age, and in about 20% of the cases, the result is death.

Maybe you've heard of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) a mosquito-borne virus quite active in the U.S. this year, that kills 1 in 3 victims who develop neuro-invasive complications. You may have also heard of West Nile Virus, also a mosquito-borne virus that has caused roughly 25,000 encephalitis cases, and sadly, claimed more than 2,350 lives in the United States. Other causes include autoimmune disorders, the Herpes Simplex virus, chicken pox and many others.

Encephalitis411.org

info@encephalitis411.org

Feel free to text or call this number to reach a team member who can listen to your needs and direct you to the appropriate resources

1.833.411.3350



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Those who survive the assault of encephalitis are often left with permanent brain injury, requiring ongoing expert medical treatment and skilled professional rehabilitation. Survivors' residual symptoms are varied, life-altering and costly, leaving them and their loved ones changed forever. What's worse, diagnosis and treatments are complicated.

+50%

of cases have an unidentified cause which impedes understanding of prevention or the proper treatment

75%

experience a delayed diagnosis based on a recent poll of **300+** survivors

50%

of cases do not receive treatments or therapies beyond the acute phase

In the years since Nicole's death, Suzanne Spector, Nicole's mom, misses her every day, wondering what her life would have been like as she sees her daughter's friends.

"You never get over the loss of your own child," she says. As a kindergarten teacher who enjoys yoga and running art and science camps, Suzanne honors Nicole's life each year with Nicole's Challenge: The Walk to Cure Encephalitis.

"I just wanted to do something to feel more positive about my loss," Suzanne says humbly. The funds raised at these walks support **Encephalitis411**, an organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life for those impacted by encephalitis. With Suzanne's selfless support, she provided the seed money that has allowed this non-profit to host support groups, conduct research, intervene during crises, and field hotline calls.

Those in the area are invited to come join the walk on **November 10, 2019, from 10 am to noon at Lake Balboa Park in Encino, California.** For everyone else, you can organize a walk around your neighborhood and share your walk photos on our Facebook page.



Grab some friends and join us to celebrate the life of Nicole Seiler and to support more research, advocacy and awareness for encephalitis. Visit **Encephalitis411.org** for more information.

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