

United in Health

Did You Know?

More than 1.4 million people in the U.S.—including approximately 8,000 Nebraskans—have Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis. IBD (inflammatory bowel disease) is largely a disease of the developed world.



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Shannon had heard of Crohn’s disease but knew nothing about it before her friend Katarina was diagnosed with it in 2010. Unfortunately, in 2011, Kat passed away due to complications from her Crohn’s disease.

Then in 2012, Shannon began having really bad abdominal pain and was having to make frequent trips to the bathroom. This went on for three weeks before she went in to see someone, and her physician recommended getting a colonoscopy. She was then diagnosed with Crohn’s disease. “The only thing running through my mind was Kat—images of her in the hospital and being sick. I was so scared and unsure of what my fate would be with this disease.”

Luckily, Shannon had the most amazing support system to rely on, including her family and friends and Kat’s family. “They pushed me to get better and to not give up hope that I could live with Crohn’s disease. I also had amazing support from my gastroenterologist.”

Shannon is currently in remission. She is back to working in a daycare, and she is also a full-time student at UNL. “Having Crohn’s disease has completely changed my life, and I am so thankful for that. It has taught me to enjoy every day and to enjoy the small things in life. I have Crohn’s disease, Crohn’s disease does not have me!”