Return to the court: Taylor De Boer's health journey
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Broadcast Version

INTRO:

TAYLOR DE BOER KNOWS HOW QUICKLY LIFE CAN TAKE A DRASTIC TURN.
A RISING STAR IN THE VOLLEYBALL WORLD – DE BOER WAS GEARING UP TO PLAY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS IN 2023… AFTER SERVING AS CAPTAIN FOR TEAM CANADA'S U19 TEAM IN 2022.

TAKE VO

BUT TAYLOR STARTED HAVING HEALTH PROBLEMS IN MAY OF 2023. FIRST – SHE EXPERIENCED SINUS… EAR… AND EYE INFECTIONS. AFTER GETTING HER WISDOM TEETH REMOVED – THEY GOT INFECTED. SHE WENT ON ANTIOBIOTICS – BUT TAYLOR WASN'T GETTING ANY BETTER. SOMETHING WAS CLEARLY WRONG.

AFTER HER MEDICAL TEAM ORDERED SEVERAL TESTS – TAYLOR – WHO WAS 17 AT THE TIME – WAS SENT TO OSF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ILLINOIS IN PEORIA. THERE – IT WAS DISCOVERED SHE HAD ANTI-NEUTROPHIL CYTOPLASMIC ANTIBODY – COMMONLY KNOWN AS ANCA **(AIN-cuh)** VASCULITIS.

ANCA IS A RARE AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE THAT CAN ATTACK MANY SYSTEMS LIKE THE LUNGS… KIDNEYS… JOINTS… SINUSES… ALL AT THE SAME TIME.

AFTER TWO HOSPITAL STAYS OF RECEIVING TREATMENT… INCLUDING PLASMA TRANSFUSIONS… TAYLOR WAS ABLE TO GO HOME. NOW CAME ANOTHER DIFFICULT JOURNEY – THE RECOVERY.

TAKE SOT | Taylor De Boer | University of Illinois Volleyball Player

"Your body needs time to learn how to move again. I basically had to learn how to play volleyball again, which was a little ugly in the beginning," says Taylor, laughing. "I'm at a point where I have a jump count I have to hit, to keep elevating the number of times I jump so I'm more comfortable in every practice setting. I'm working out with the team full time, practicing full time and am back in the swing of things which is nice."

VO TAG

DR. KELSEY GRIMES – TAYLOR'S DOCTOR AND A THIRD-YEAR RESIDENT AT OSF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ILLINOIS – TEAMED UP WITH TAYLOR'S COACHING AND TRAINING STAFF TO ENSURE THE RECOVERY PLAN WAS AT THE RIGHT SPEED… AND NOT GOING TOO FAST. TAYLOR HAS A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE NOW – SHE WANTS TO USE HER STORY TO HELP OTHERS.

TAKE SOT

"I just want to be an advocate for those who feel like they can't do that anymore or struggle to find their passion for it because they think they're not allowed to do it," she says.

VO TAG

AND SHE'S DOING JUST THAT. SHE NOW WORKS WITH THE UPLIFTING ATHLETES ORGANIZATION – GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT TO OTHER ATHLETES SUFFERING FROM RARE AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES. SHE RETURNED TO FULL TRAINING WITH THE U OF I TEAM THIS YEAR AND IS GEARING UP FOR THE FALL SEASON NOW.

ADDITIONAL SOUNDBITES:

LISA DE BOER | TAYLOR'S MOTHER "I remember days where there were lots of tears, and days where she was overwhelmed. She talks about it a lot now, but trying not to be too toxically positive, knowing that it was a bad day. Letting the bad days be the bad days," Lisa says. "That was hard as a parent because you want to take away

some of the anxiety and stress and make things better, but you can't always do that. It was a matter of sitting with her in her tough days and being present."

"Every nurse and doctor took their time, was really patient with me and understood that I didn't really know what was going on," Taylor says. "It was also a new setting because I was a 17-year-old kid, and everyone else on my floor was little babies. So, it was definitely a different experience, but everyone treated me really well and I was really lucky."

DR. KELSEY GRIMES | PEDIATRICS RESIDENT | OSF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ILLINOIS

"The different organs that were impacted because of this illness, you have to give them time to recover with that. That is sometimes hard to tell. Everyone recovers differently. You have specific medications you have to stay on to prevent infections. That can be a prolonged thing," Dr. Grimes says. "Then you have the deconditioning that happens because of prolonged admission. She's not doing the same exercise that she was doing prior, so you have to work your way back up from a physical and muscular standpoint."