

Lenny

One year old Lenny has Down syndrome and has had open heart surgery at Alder Hey. Since his successful operation Lenny surpasses doctor's expectations with his swift recovery and his smiley face lights up everyone's day.

As soon as Lenny was born, it was suspected that he had Down syndrome, and it was confirmed a few days later after genetic testing. Down syndrome is caused by an extra chromosome in a baby's cells.

The day after his birth he had a routine cardiac scan which showed he also had Complete Atrioventricular Septal Defect (CAVSD) which means he had two holes in his heart and only one valve instead of two.

Some health conditions are more common in people with Down syndrome such as heart conditions, hearing and vision problems, thyroid conditions and infections such as pneumonia. Most children with Down syndrome will also have a learning disability.

At six months old Lenny underwent open heart surgery at Alder Hey. He was expected to be in hospital for up to five weeks, but by the time he got to intensive care he was breathing for himself and four days later, the little fighter was home and well.

Lenny has even reached milestones before his now five year old sister did at his age such as rolling over, sitting up and clapping. Lenny is such a happy child who loves his older sister; his eyes light up when he sees her.

Consultant Margaret O'Connor has had a big part in Lenny's treatment, as he suffers with constipation, and has recently had several chest infections, so Lenny is under the watchful eye of Dr O'Connor who is brilliant with him.

Katrina is an A&E nurse at Alder Hey and has cared for Lenny many times, from when he went into cardiac failure at 3 weeks old, treating his 1st episode of severe constipation at five months old, to caring for him when he was admitted for a chest infection at 14 months.

Mum Vikki said "Every family should have a baby with Down syndrome; I wouldn't change him for the world. The staff at Alder Hey like his Consultant Dr O'Connor and Katrina from A&E are so lovely, they treat him as their own and I feel like we're in the safest of hands. They really are brilliant. Having a child with Down syndrome is nothing to be scared of; they bring so much joy and happiness to your life."