

Laurie's story

They say that everyone in the world is connected by as little as six degrees of separation. But when it comes to liver disease, it's only four.

Research now shows that 1 in 4 Canadians may be affected by liver disease.

If you'd told Laurie and Clark those odds, they would have said that it sounded crazy. That was until their daughter Kyla was born with a life-threatening liver disease called biliary atresia. They were shocked to learn that not only can babies have liver disease but that biliary atresia has no known cause or cure. Kyla needed a liver transplant to survive and it gave her seven more years with her family. She passed away just weeks before her 11th birthday.



“It was a harsh wakeup call to the realities of liver disease,” says Laurie. “The more we learned, the more we realized how little everyone knows about how common and often deadly liver disease can be.”

Laurie was connected to liver disease in more ways than even she knew; her brother had contracted hepatitis C from a blood transfusion years before but was reluctant to tell his sister after she had already lost Kyla. After undergoing several unsuccessful rounds of treatment, her brother was finally cured and today at age 64 finally has his energy back and is back to his old self.

Liver disease would continue to take its toll on Laurie and Clark's family however. Clark's father passed away from liver cancer. His mother was a diabetic and passed away from what doctors at the time called 'non-alcoholic liver disease'. Laurie suspects it was actually fatty liver disease. It affects all ages, even children as young as 4, and is destined to become the leading cause of liver transplants.

Liver disease has inflicted a devastating toll on Laurie's family but her story is not unique. This is happening to families every day, the time to act is now. To learn how you can help yourself and others, visit www.liver.ca/TooClose4Comfort