



NEWS

- Home
- Local News
- CBS News

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THE NEED FOR BLOOD

J. M. Green
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- Local Doppler
- Forecast
- Satellite Images
- National
- Doppler Network

This week's icy weather is expected to cause more accidents, further depleting the Nation's blood supply. With an extreme shortage, that's bad news for one little boy who's fighting for his life.

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Before August 2002, life was pretty normal for Taylor Watts. Then he started limping. After numerous doctor visits, he was mis-diagnosed with juvenile arthritis. Turns out he had something far worse. "We were actually at the hospital on October 10th for a bone scan to see which joints were affected by arthritis and they discovered a tumor," said Kim Watts, Taylor's mother.

A cancerous tumor -- one that attacks the sympathetic nervous system. He is in the worst of four stages. "That means his tumor progressed and spread to his bones and bone marrow, and that's the hard part to treat," said Ms. Watts.

MEDICAL

- Medical Minute

Taylor goes to chemotherapy every 21 days. After every session, his blood count plummets, compromising his immune system. He usually needs at least one unit of whole blood and one unit of platelets each week. Recently his mouth started bleeding for lack of platelets. "It was just scary to sit there and watch your baby bleed and you couldn't really do anything about it," said Ms. Watts.

LOCAL

- Job Listings
- EEOC

In dealing with her son's illness has prompted Ms. Watt's to become a regular blood donor. "I didn't do it because I thought it was painful and I thought it was time consuming, and it's neither," said Ms. Watts.

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- CBS Daytime
- CBS Primetime
- CBS Late Night
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The Watts family is asking everyone to come out and donate blood this Saturday at the Ridge Park Red Cross Center. It's located one block off Highland Avenue behind the Western Supermarket.

You can also read about his progress [by clicking here for Taylor Watt's webpage.](#)