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THE WEE WHISPERER – HOW TAKING A LEAK CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

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One day when he was 4, my son woke up with puffy eyes. Given I was working full-time, and with my one year-old daughter on my hip, as he wasn't bleeding out of said eyeballs (and otherwise appeared to be a healthy and active little chap) I brushed it aside, telling myself it most likely was nothing of consequence. Maybe it was the pollen in the air? Maybe it was an allergic reaction? Maybe he ate something that didn't agree with him? Maybe it was Maybelline. With no further symptoms, I decided to make like Elsa and 'let it go'.

A day or so later, I fleetingly remember thinking he looked a bit pudgy on his legs – quite common for kids as they grow, right? A slight weight gain, followed by a growth spurt, working up that growth chart on the kitchen wall in the blink of an eye and then boom, your kids are teenagers. It's all par the course. Or so I thought.

Come the weekend, my son awoke with not only puffy eyes and chubby legs, but also a stomach that looked somewhat like my own when I was 9 months pregnant with him. It was distended to the point he had no belly-button, with the swelling so profound it had literally pushed it out. Terrified, it was at the minute that I realised something was very, very wrong. Our life was about to turn upside down.

My son was diagnosed with a chronic kidney condition which now, at age 18, he manages with daily medication. Over the past 14 years, he has seen more hospital visits than I care to mention, and suffers frequent relapses where his kidneys stop working.



At this juncture, his condition necessitates lengthy procedures, painful side-effects and nasty drugs including a potent intravenous diuretic called LASIX, and Rituximab, an intravenous drug most commonly used to treat non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Additionally, he remains on very high doses of steroid that's used to prevent kidney failure but ultimately can be at a high cost to your health. It is all horrible, heart-breaking and utterly devastating to for him to experience – and for his family and friends who love him so much – to watch him go through.

But the thing is, most kidney disease can be preventable if caught early. The problem for me was, I had no idea of knowing any symptoms or signs. As kidney disease is sadly not highly publicised, and with no prior exposure to the nature of this disease, how could I have known?

I now know 70% of your kidney function can be completely gone before you see any symptoms and by this time, it's too late.

It is coined 'the silent killer' for this very reason.



One way I could have discovered my son's illness early is, just like stocking up on Panadol in the pantry, I had urine test strips like [WeTestonline.com](https://www.wetestonline.com) urine strips on hand.



Call it the 'wee whisperer'; by way of a simple urine test every few weeks for not only your kids but the whole family, **We Test** can red flag if there's any underlying issues.

Not unlike a pregnancy test, **We Test** is a simple stick that you pee on that can indicate a problem not only for kidney disease, but also pointing you straight to your local doctor to diagnose anything from diabetes and bladder cancer. **WeTest** urine strips allows for early detection of health issues, which means early intervention, and better outcomes.

I strongly suggest you make the purchase and get in the habit of testing the entire family on the regular.

Oh, and make sure you tell your friends. Some things may not be as exciting as Kim Kardashian's latest outfit, but are well-worth sharing and in the end, can be life-saving.

You can buy **We Test** online here www.wetestonline.com.

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