

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE THROUGH PERSEVERANCE

JOSHUA'S STORY

Joshua Blackaby, 26, from Hebron, Kentucky, was involved in a car accident on August 10, 2012. His injuries were so severe that he required immediate medical attention. The trauma Joshua suffered resulted in swelling in his brain and he eventually fell into a coma for 11 days.



Joshua was immediately taken to University of Cincinnati Hospital and was placed in the neuro intensive care unit (NICU). Once he woke up from the coma, Joshua was transferred to the Drake Center for inpatient care physical therapies. Joshua came to HealthSouth Northern Kentucky Rehabilitation Hospital for outpatient care on October 19.

Before Joshua's accident, he was in excellent physical health. He was a marathon runner who enjoyed exercising, juggling a soccer ball, going on long walks and being outside. But, Joshua's brain injury caused his right leg to contract, inverting and planterflexing his foot. He could not walk, coordinate movements, communicate or think clearly.

When Joshua arrived at HealthSouth Northern Kentucky, he could only get around using a wheelchair. His physical therapist gave him a brace to help stop the muscle contractions in his leg. Joshua also engaged in speech therapy to relearn how to speak correctly and in occupational therapy to reconnect how to put away dishes, fold clothes, and get in and out of the shower. Soon, Joshua was helping the staff with chores around the hospital.

"I was treated with the upmost care and respect at HealthSouth Northern Kentucky," Joshua said. "The staff is amazingly personable and cares about the patient's recovery."

As Joshua became more clear-minded and focused, he no longer needed daily occupational or speech therapy sessions. His mom was impressed with how Joshua's therapists went above and beyond with working with him. Joshua's rehabilitation team noticed his vast improvement and used his volunteer work around the hospital as therapy in addition to regular gym therapies, even including him in the holiday staff party.

"My treatment at HealthSouth Northern Kentucky was exceptional," Joshua said. "My rehabilitation team helped me relearn how to communicate, move independently, complete daily self-care tasks and continue living to the best of my ability."

Since his first round of outpatient therapy, Joshua has returned to HealthSouth Northern Kentucky multiple times between 2012 and 2014 for additional help, and now only uses a cane to help him walk. Today, Joshua is driving, cooking, balancing his checkbook and working on his master's degree at Northern Kentucky University.

"I am forever grateful for the hard work the staff at HealthSouth Northern Kentucky did for my recovery," Joshua said. "I would not be as healthy and independent without the amazing assistance I received from my therapists."

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The Joint Commission Disease-Specific Care Certification in Stroke Rehabilitation

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Admissions 859 344-4230