



Alyssa was born in February of 2014 at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines 14 weeks early and weighing 15.5 ounces. She spent her first 5 months in the NICU fighting to get big and well enough to come home. She had a very difficult time coming off the ventilator and failed every time they tried to extubate her, resulting in the need for a tracheostomy. She had 5 major surgeries while in the NICU but after she received her trach she was determined to go home and went home within a month of that surgery. While in the NICU the social worker connected us with Universal Pediatrics. Alyssa went home and started nursing care with Universal Pediatrics in August of 2014. She had tracheostomy and g-tube care. Not long after coming home from the NICU, Alyssa had complications and had to be readmitted to get a ventilator. Alyssa's nurses have been wonderful in caring for her health, physical well-being, and developmental needs. They are a part of our family and we love our nurses. Alyssa was referred to a physician at Cincinnati Children's Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio for an airway reconstruction. She had a stage 4 subglottic stenosis in her airway in January 2016. She had her first double stage laryngotracheal reconstruction at the end of May 2016. They harvested some her own rib cartilage and built her a new airway using that cartilage. After many more 9 hour trips and surgeries to Cincinnati, in June 2017 Alyssa failed a capping trial during the night and it was determined that they would have to re-do her reconstruction again. On October 4, 2017 Alyssa had a single stage Laryngotracheal Reconstruction. They re-did the rib cartilage graft, took out her trach and put a breathing tube in for 8 days. She was sedated for 8 days and then they took out her breathing tube. She did great with the extubating and was breathing on her own but had to withdrawal from the sedation meds for 9 days. During the entire time we were gone Universal Pediatrics nurses and Clinical Nurse Managers were checking on how she was doing. Alyssa has now had 35 surgeries in her short 3 and half years of life. She is now trach free and doing wonderful! She announced her big news by wearing this shirt that says, "I'm excited to be TRACH FREE! #39.5 months #1202 days #28,848 hrs # 1,730,880 min # 103,852,500 sec."