



LEA MORRISON

The language of eyes

When Lea Morrison, a marathoner and tri-athlete, and her husband Billy wanted to start a family, Lea scheduled a visit with her OB/GYN for a normal pre-pregnancy checkup. After several appointments and multiple tests, Lea received devastating news — a diagnosis of chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML). Lea weighed and tried other options, but ultimately chose to undergo a bone marrow transplant in December 2007.

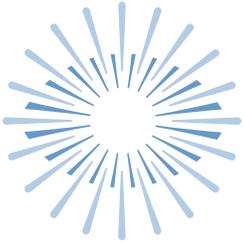
The transplant saved her life, but led to a new problem: graft versus host disease (GVHD), a life-threatening autoimmune condition. Lea's eyes burned and itched with dryness, and she became so light sensitive that she was forced to wear sunglasses 24/7, even when she went to bed.

Everyday communication between a husband and a wife became complicated for the Morrisons. Husband: "Are you OK?" Wife: "Yes, my eyes just kill me right now." Lea frequently had to clarify what she was thinking and feeling because her face often reflected only her painful struggle with GVHD.

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“I HAVE HAD THE PLEASURE to know Lea since we were soccer teammates in high school. Even then, her fierce determination and passion drew in everyone around her. Being a witness to the transformation that PROSE had on my courageous friend - her beautiful blue eyes and smile lit up the entire room - was priceless.”
— **Beth Beard, BFS Director of Communications**





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Lea Morrison continued

But this athlete turned cancer survivor was not used to giving up. At just over two years cancer free, Lea's doctors gave her the go-ahead to live her life to the fullest. For Lea and Billy, that meant adopting newborn baby Henry. Lea mothered Henry in all the ways that new mothers do — she caressed him, sang to him and took care of his every need. Yet she instinctively knew that looking at him through strained red eyes was interfering with his ability to see all of her love for him.

In February 2011 that all changed when she went home from BFS with PROSE devices. Not only is Lea no longer burdened with chronic pain and the need for frequent naps to rest her eyes, but her face now accurately represents her love for her family and zest for life. "It is unbelievable to be able to interact with Henry without my sunglasses on, for him to really engage in my eyes. To be a more active mom for him is a huge gift, and the bonding and attachment through the eyes is just beyond words."

