

Not a day goes by that Jody Nissan doesn't worry about her family. Her husband and two of her three children have been diagnosed with HHT. In 2006, the Nissan's were motivated to raise funds to find a cure for HHT when they attended the HHT Foundation's National Conference in San Diego, CA; thus began the first "Fighting for a Cure" Dinner Dance that has now become an annual event. Motivated by their parents, the Nissan children have even gotten involved in fundraising. In 2010, Jody is more committed than ever to finding a cure. With the help of her friends and family, she has taken on the challenge to organize an event on a larger scale. She received a package in the mail from the HHT Foundation on how to plan a walk-a-thon and she has created her own event — "Hope Holds the Cure." This event will take place in her local community of Canton, Michigan on August 7, 2010. Her goal is to raise a minimum of \$50,000 and this is her story...



# Our Story

## Hope Holds the Cure: One Woman's Motivation to Fundraise

By Jody Nissan



I am totally amazed at the support of my friends and family. My group here in Michigan is saddened to see what my husband and kids go through with this horrible disease. The fear of the unknown and what will tomorrow bring with HHT is very challenging. Unfortunately, HHT does not "play by the rules." It has a mind of its own and without a cure, which can be very scary and tragic at times. My goal in life is to put an end to this horrible disease for those that I love and all others that are struggling with this on a daily basis. To wake up every day and know that my family is battling a disease that does not have a cure leaves me feeling very helpless. To look at my 10 year old daughter who battles daily nosebleeds and know that she has AVMs growing inside of her and her dad, truly breaks my heart as a mother.

Fundraising has given me the hope to go on and fight for a future for my family and all others with this disease. I will not sit back and just let this disease win. I know a cure is out there, we just have to raise the money and keep pushing ahead. Is it hard some days? ABSOLUTELY! I often want to close my eyes and wake up realizing this was all a very bad dream. That is not going to happen. When HHT digs its claws in your family, it can turn your world upside down financially, physically and emotionally!

It is for this reason that I have started a new fundraiser entitled "Hope Holds the Cure" — a walk-a-thon to benefit the HHT Foundation based on information I received from the foundation. It is my goal to raise \$50,000. I realize that this goal is not possible without the help of others. It will take team work. I looked to my friends and

family and gathered 20 individuals that I know will focus on helping me achieve my goal. These individuals have become our "Team Captains." They, in turn, have agreed to form their own teams and raise of minimum of \$10,000. Each team will organize their own individual events including golf outings, roller skating events, card parties, soccer tournaments, etc. We will hold monthly team meetings for the captains to report on their progress.

**Together, we can make a difference.** In seeing the generous support and time that my family and friends have put into this event, is more than I could ever imagine. They truly give me reason to smile and believe that one day I will be able to live in a world without the fear that HHT will take the life of someone I love. I just want that day to be here soon!

**Fundraising is not hard.** I am not a genius. I do not have a lot of connections in the community. I am certainly not a very creative person. I am a wife and mother with a passion to find a cure for the disease that threatens the life of those I love very much.

**If you are hesitant to start your own fundraiser, please feel free to join me for your first time.** It is truly the most rewarding thing I have ever done in my life. It gives me the purpose to go on and you can have that same feeling if you are just willing to take a chance and organize an event.

**Together we can make a difference and put an end to HHT.**

Visit the walk-a-thon's website at:  
<http://www.ourhopeholdsthecure.org/>.