# Chloe's inspiring journey: A battle against heart disease and hope through new therapy



Chloe Flevill, a 36-year-old from Oldham, Lancashire, has experienced a remarkable turn of events in her battle with dilated cardiomyopathy, a heart condition that not only affected her but also took the life of her elder sister, Anna, at just two years old. The rare genetic disorder caused Anna's heart to enlarge, leading to congestive heart failure when she was merely a baby. After Anna's tragic death, Chloe's parents were comforted by a medical assurance that such a fate was unlikely to repeat, and they went on to have Chloe two years later.

Chloe lived a seemingly normal life until the age of 29, when she began to notice concerning symptoms such as heart palpitations and shortness of breath. Initially hesitant to seek medical attention due to the perceived burden on the NHS, she eventually heeded the advice of a worried colleague who indicated that her health appeared severely compromised. A visit to her GP led to an urgent hospital admission after irregularities were noted in her heart tests.

The diagnosis came as a shock: Chloe had developed the same rare condition as her sister. Despite the incurable nature of the condition, medical advancements since the 1980s offered a glimmer of hope, with her doctors emphasising the potential for new treatments to help regain some lost heart function. However, the reality of her situation soon set in as she was advised against having children due to the strain on her health, prompting further emotional turmoil.

As the years passed, Chloe's condition deteriorated. After attending a family camping trip where her symptoms intensified, she found herself in congestive heart failure. "It’s not the life me and my husband had planned," she remarked, expressing feelings of hopelessness regarding her future and the possibility of needing a heart transplant.

Quite by chance, Chloe was inspired by a segment on BBC's The One Show which featured a male patient discussing groundbreaking new stem cell therapy at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, funded by the Heart Cells Foundation. The procedure, which extracts stem cells from the patient's bone marrow and injects them back into the heart, had reportedly yielded positive results for many participants. Motivated by his story, Chloe sought an assessment for the experimental therapy, which was being offered on a compassionate basis to select patients.

In November 2023, Chloe underwent the innovative treatment, and the results have been life-altering. She noted immediate improvements, such as increased mobility and the ability to complete tasks that had previously seemed insurmountable. Reflecting on this transformation, Chloe stated, "I wouldn’t say I’d got my life back, I’d say I’ve been given a new life by the Heart Cells Foundation."

Professor Anthony Mathur, the lead consultant at St Bartholomew's and a trustee of the Heart Cells Foundation, has indicated that an estimated one million patients with heart failure could eventually benefit from this treatment. He expressed hopes that it could be rolled out within the NHS in the next five to ten years and outlined the economic potential of the therapy, which could save billions for the NHS and the wider economy.

The Heart Cells Foundation is actively fundraising to support larger trials aimed at solidifying the treatment's efficacy for broader NHS adoption. Chloe remains hopeful and committed to advocating for the therapy, which she feels should be made available as soon as possible. After a recent check-up, she shared positive news, revealing that her condition had improved significantly, bringing her close to what is considered normal heart function.

Chloe's story underscores both the advancements in medical science regarding treatment for heart conditions and the personal impact of such innovations on patients and families who have navigated similar tragic experiences.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/familial-dilated-cardiomyopathy/> - This website provides information on familial dilated cardiomyopathy, explaining it as a genetic condition affecting the heart muscle, leading to its enlargement and weakened pumping ability, similar to what Chloe experienced.
2. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4288017/> - This article discusses the genetic causes of dilated cardiomyopathy, highlighting that it can be inherited in an autosomal pattern and involves mutations in numerous genes affecting heart function, which aligns with Chloe's genetic condition.
3. <https://ucsfhealthcardiology.ucsf.edu/patient-care/clinical-services/cardiovascular-genetics/familial-dilated-cardiomyopathy> - This page offers insights into familial dilated cardiomyopathy, including its impact on families, symptoms, and treatment options, similar to the experiences faced by Chloe and her family.
4. <https://www.uclahealth.org/medical-services/heart/genetics/conditions/dilated-cardiomyopathy> - This resource elaborates on dilated cardiomyopathy, including its genetic aspects and how it affects the heart, providing context for Chloe's condition and treatment journey.
5. <https://www.uclh.nhs.uk/our-services/find-service/hospital-services/cardiac/services/bart-cardiovascular/institute/cardiovascular-innovation> - This link provides information about St Bartholomew's Hospital, which is involved in innovative cardiac treatments, aligning with the context of Chloe's Stem Cell Therapy.
6. <https://www.orpha.net/en/disease/detail/154> - This webpage discusses familial isolated dilated cardiomyopathy, its genetic origins, and various inheritance patterns, offering a detailed understanding of the condition faced by Chloe and her sister.
7. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/health/one-show-saves-woman-viewer-35051182> - Please view link - unable to able to access data