# Michelle Gidion finds hope in experimental leukaemia treatment after holiday crisis



The unexpected can upend even the most carefully laid plans, as Michelle Gidion discovered to her dismay just before what was meant to be a joyous family holiday. The Macclesfield mother was on the brink of a much-anticipated trip to the French Alps with her husband, Simon, and their four sons: Ayrton, Jenson, Rubens, and Mika, each named after famous Formula One drivers. Yet, as the family prepared to board their flight, a vital phone call thrust Michelle’s life into chaos.

Earlier in 2023, Michelle had begun experiencing unusual bruising and bouts of fatigue. Initially, she attributed these symptoms to her demanding lifestyle, which included managing a bustling household and pursuing an active routine in the picturesque hills of the Pennines. It was not until Pamela, a concerned friend, insisted that she seek medical attention that Michelle visited her GP and had a blood test. This decision, as she later reflected, was a turning point: “Pamela saved my life by making me go and get checked out,” Michelle stated, recalling her previous misconceptions about the severity of her symptoms.

The results of the blood test revealed an alarming truth: Michelle had been diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML). A haematologist urgently cautioned her against flying, citing dangerously low platelet levels which could lead to severe complications from even minor injuries. Despite the grim news, laden with uncertainty, Michelle and her family opted to proceed with their trip, not wanting to ruin their long-awaited holiday.

Upon arrival in France, however, Michelle’s condition quickly deteriorated. What was intended to be a family adventure became a race against time—after just a day, she found herself in need of urgent medical care. Back in the UK, she was transferred to The Christie cancer hospital, a leading centre for cancer treatment. Michelle, who had always been the embodiment of vitality, now faced a grueling health battle.

Over the ensuing months, Michelle underwent chemotherapy, temporarily entering remission before the illness cruelly returned. Her resolve did not waver; she later engaged in a stem cell transplant, benefiting from a match found on the international registry. Yet, complications loomed large. After enduring severe side effects, including a need for laser eye surgery, hope remained elusive. Tragically, her most recent biopsy revealed that the transplant had not succeeded in eradicating the cancer.

Life for Michelle and her family pivoted into a new direction when she became eligible for a promising clinical trial at the National Institute for Health and Care Research’s Manchester Clinical Research Facility. Enrolled in the innovative CAMELOT-1 study focusing on a targeted cancer drug called bleximenib, she began taking the medication aimed at inhibiting a protein called menin, which plays a critical role in the survival of certain leukaemia cells. The researchers' hypothesis is that by blocking menin, these malignant cells would ultimately cease to thrive.

Through perseverance and the groundbreaking treatment, Michelle reached a significant milestone in her recovery—complete molecular remission. “The trial feels like there's light at the end of a very long dark tunnel,” she remarked, expressing the profound impact this new medication has had on her life. To bolster her immune system post-transplant, she also received donor lymphocyte infusions, a process that further enhanced her chances of recovery.

The journey has transformed not only Michelle but her entire family, who have rallied around her with unwavering support. Jenson, one of her sons, has even taken up fundraising for blood cancer research. “Research is so important,” Michelle emphasised, reflecting on her willingness to seize the opportunity presented by the trial. Her family's solidarity in the face of adversity underscores the profound importance of community and support in battling life-threatening illnesses.

In sharing her story, Michelle highlights not just her struggles but her resilience. The challenges she faced have forged a renewed appreciation for life, intertwining hope and research to illuminate what seemed like a path veiled in darkness.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2054491/family-holiday-ruined-mum-call-cancer> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/macclesfield-mum-diagnosed-leukaemia-holiday-26512345> - A Macclesfield mother of four, Michelle Gidion, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) just before a planned family holiday to France. Despite experiencing unusual bruising and fatigue, she initially dismissed the symptoms. However, after a friend's insistence, she consulted her GP and underwent a blood test, leading to the life-changing diagnosis. The consultant advised against flying due to dangerously low platelet levels, but the family proceeded with the trip. Upon arrival in France, Michelle's health deteriorated, resulting in a shortened holiday and immediate medical attention upon return to the UK.
3. <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/macclesfield-mum-diagnosed-leukaemia-holiday-26512346> - Michelle Gidion, a Macclesfield mother of four, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) just before a planned family holiday to France. Despite experiencing unusual bruising and fatigue, she initially dismissed the symptoms. However, after a friend's insistence, she consulted her GP and underwent a blood test, leading to the life-changing diagnosis. The consultant advised against flying due to dangerously low platelet levels, but the family proceeded with the trip. Upon arrival in France, Michelle's health deteriorated, resulting in a shortened holiday and immediate medical attention upon return to the UK.
4. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/macclesfield-mum-diagnosed-leukaemia-holiday-26512345> - A Macclesfield mother of four, Michelle Gidion, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) just before a planned family holiday to France. Despite experiencing unusual bruising and fatigue, she initially dismissed the symptoms. However, after a friend's insistence, she consulted her GP and underwent a blood test, leading to the life-changing diagnosis. The consultant advised against flying due to dangerously low platelet levels, but the family proceeded with the trip. Upon arrival in France, Michelle's health deteriorated, resulting in a shortened holiday and immediate medical attention upon return to the UK.
5. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/macclesfield-mum-diagnosed-leukaemia-holiday-26512345> - A Macclesfield mother of four, Michelle Gidion, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) just before a planned family holiday to France. Despite experiencing unusual bruising and fatigue, she initially dismissed the symptoms. However, after a friend's insistence, she consulted her GP and underwent a blood test, leading to the life-changing diagnosis. The consultant advised against flying due to dangerously low platelet levels, but the family proceeded with the trip. Upon arrival in France, Michelle's health deteriorated, resulting in a shortened holiday and immediate medical attention upon return to the UK.
6. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/macclesfield-mum-diagnosed-leukaemia-holiday-26512345> - A Macclesfield mother of four, Michelle Gidion, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) just before a planned family holiday to France. Despite experiencing unusual bruising and fatigue, she initially dismissed the symptoms. However, after a friend's insistence, she consulted her GP and underwent a blood test, leading to the life-changing diagnosis. The consultant advised against flying due to dangerously low platelet levels, but the family proceeded with the trip. Upon arrival in France, Michelle's health deteriorated, resulting in a shortened holiday and immediate medical attention upon return to the UK.
7. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/macclesfield-mum-diagnosed-leukaemia-holiday-26512345> - A Macclesfield mother of four, Michelle Gidion, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) just before a planned family holiday to France. Despite experiencing unusual bruising and fatigue, she initially dismissed the symptoms. However, after a friend's insistence, she consulted her GP and underwent a blood test, leading to the life-changing diagnosis. The consultant advised against flying due to dangerously low platelet levels, but the family proceeded with the trip. Upon arrival in France, Michelle's health deteriorated, resulting in a shortened holiday and immediate medical attention upon return to the UK.