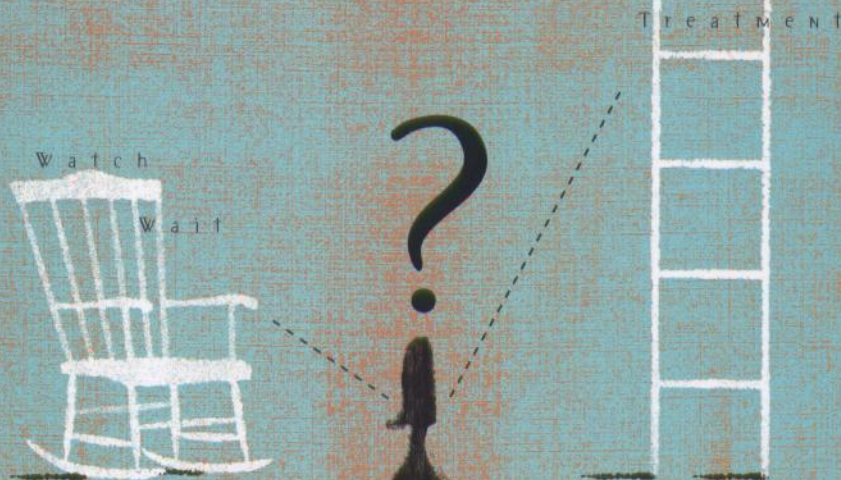


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BY JO CAVALLO

The Shadow Survivors

A childhood cancer diagnosis often makes well siblings feel like they're battling the disease too.

LIKE MOST HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS, Jasmine Brenneman was looking forward to prom, graduating and going off to college. But those plans suddenly seemed in doubt after her younger brother, Josh, now 6, was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma in 2004, and much of the responsibility for caring for her three younger sisters fell to her.

"I didn't know what it would mean for me personally and as time went on, it was a hard struggle because I had to finish high school, I was working part-time to get money for school and I was applying for college scholarships," says Jasmine, now 19. "And on top of all that, I had to be there for my younger sisters and take care of them. Sometimes I didn't feel that I did that great a job."

Jasmine admits she's angry at the sense of loss she feels, not just for herself but for Josh too. She lost her senior year in high school and Josh lost his innocence and childhood. "The main thing for me that's so hard is realizing that our lives will never go back to the way they were before. We know all the details of what having cancer means. It's changed us and that's a scary thought," says Jasmine, now a sophomore at Simpson University in California.

Jasmine is among a growing population of some 18,000 siblings of children diagnosed with cancer each year, according to a group dubbed SuperSibs! by founder Melanie



