# Girl Who Lost Feet In Lawnmower Undergoes Seven Surgeries, Gets Prosthetics

A toddler whose feet were amputated after her father accidentally backed over her with a riding lawnmower took her first steps on her new prosthetic test legs Monday.

Ireland Nugent has been in a wheelchair and has undergone seven surgeries since the April 11 accident. Doctors warned she may be hesitant at first after being fitted for the test legs, but the little girl promptly took off walking as soon as they were on. She fell once, but immediately got back up.

"I'm just speechless and so proud," said her father, Jerry Nugent, who recorded her steps. "She took it over the top. ... She's not ever going to hold back. That's my superhero. That's my angel."

The Tampa Bay Times (http://www.ittybittyurl.com/U6w) reports that Ireland has already become emotionally attached to the legs. When the prosthetist said he would need the test limbs back, the little girl said she wanted to keep them. It didn't hurt that the sneakers attached to the prosthetics were pink Velcro with Dora the Explorer stickers.

Ireland was to practice with them Monday night in the hotel room before receiving her finished prosthetics Tuesday. The final limbs were set to feature Minnie Mouse and Dora. She will need new prosthetics about every three months, at first. The limbs can cost between $1,000 to nearly $11,000 each time, and the Nugents said they are still figuring out what their insurance will cover.

The community has rallied around Ireland since the accident, raising tens of thousands of dollars for her medical care.

And while doctors inserted cartilage at the end of Ireland's stumps to slow bone growth, Nicole said Ireland could face more surgeries as she grows.

The 2-year-old's father was driving a riding mower up the driveway of their Palm Harbor home when Ireland ran out from a backyard enclosure and got behind him. Her mother motioned for him to stop, but he misinterpreted her signals and backed the mower up, running over the toddler.

The toddler's steps on her new legs were taken in front of a crowd of supporters, including neighbor Aly Smith, who is credited with helping to save her life by applying pressure to the wounds.

Ireland's mom, Nicole Nugent, said she was flooded with emotions Monday.

"Excited. Scared. Saddened that we even have to be doing this, but at the same time happy that we are able to do this," Nicole said.

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