

Polio True Story—Ambreen

Taken from Polio True Story TV Series, produced and directed by Sharp Cut Films

Living in the hilly areas of Bhaukhu, daily life for Ambreen is difficult to say the least, what with the rough terrain and all—but her polio disability just makes it all worse.

Revealing to Sharp Cut Films, Ambreen can't remember a time before having polio. From the time children usually begin to run, she began to understand that she may never. Her mother and father have strived to give her as normal a life as possible and her dream is to be able to give it all back.

But how and why did Ambreen get polio? Born at home, Ambreen did not receive routine immunization at any time, and there were no polio campaigns at that time. Her father reveals that he would go to work and assume that her mother would take care of Ambreen's health and immunization, but due to a lack of awareness about its importance, her mother did not do so. What is really sad is to know that these reasons are not unique to Ambreen, and there are many other children who do not receive routine immunization and polio drops, because families just don't realize just how important it is—until they are struck by it.

Sitting with Tauseeq Haider from Sharp Cut Films, Ambreen's mother can't speak when she recalls her mistake. She wants her daughter to continue studying with the aspiration that one day she will become a doctor—it is a dream they both share. "My parents have been there with me at every step and help me in every way possible," acknowledges Ambreen, "I would like to be able to do something for them" she expresses to Tauseeq.

But going to school is not easy. While the Sharp Cut Films team spent the day with Ambreen, it became clear just how far away from her home the school bus drops her. Yet still, she carries her own school bag along with her burdens to and from school—without anyone's help.

Walking along the rocky and uneven path towards home with a bag full of books is a feat for anyone; having to do this with polio is no less than difficult—she falls but gets back up again – she has to.

Asking her family how having polio affects Ambreen's daily life, one realizes how it is the little things that can really hurt. Trips to visit family and friends are often times when Ambreen has to stay behind.



Images courtesy Sharp Cut Films

Speaking to Tauseeq Haider from Sharp Cut Films, Ambreen gets emotional as she admits to have fallen when carrying her baby nephew Khizer, in her arms. Now when she wants to hold him, she makes sure that she is sitting down so that she never inadvertently hurts him.

It is because of children like Ambreen that polio teams now go door-to-door across the country to ensure that all children under the age of five are given polio drops and protected from this crippling disease.

"My daughter has been crippled by polio—there is no need for anyone else's to be in this position," expresses Ambreen's mother, as she requests all parents to ensure that all children under the age of five are given polio drops in every campaign.

Ambreen's story is just one in the series of Polio True Stories produced and directed by Sharp Cut Films.