Boy who nearly drowned on Disney cruise ship is moved to Minnesota hospital

April 9, 2013 | By Susan Jacobson, Orlando Sentinel

Chase Lykken, a 4-year-old boy who suffered brain damage after nearly drowning on the Disney Fantasy cruise ship less than two weeks ago, went back home to Minnesota on Tuesday, according to online postings.

Chase was released from Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children in Orlando and was transferred to Children's — Saint Paul Pediatric Hospital in Minnesota, online-journal and Facebook posts show.

"He is a fighter, and he has all of us behind him," reads a post written Tuesday morning, apparently by a family member. "The Lord spared his life, and for that I am thankful, very thankful."

The youngest of three children, the towheaded Chase had just boarded the ship with his family in Port Canaveral on March 30 for a cruise to the Western Caribbean when he was pulled from one of the ship's three pools, witnesses said.

"He was unconscious and not breathing for several minutes," an online post states. "He has a long and difficult recovery process ahead of him. The family is asking for your prayers and support."

Rescuers performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and Chase was taken to Cape Canaveral Hospital, then airlifted to Arnold Palmer Hospital.

Port Canaveral police, who are investigating, would not release details, including how long the boy was in the pool, The Florida Department of Children and Families also is investigating, a port spokeswoman said.

Chase's parents, Chris and Lisa Lykken of Prior Lake, a city 20 miles southwest of Minneapolis, were not available for comment.

According to information posted online Tuesday, the parts of Chase's brain that were damaged control motor skills and basic functions, including temperature; heart and respiration rates; hunger and thirst; the sleep-wake cycle; and eyesight.

Friends are organizing to help the family with meals and money to offset medical costs.

One photo posted of Chase shows him wearing a Captain America costume. The comic-book superhero's red, white and blue shield with a white star in the middle was posted Tuesday on Chase's Facebook and caringbridge.org pages.

The Facebook page had more than 4,300 "likes" Tuesday night. More than 2,200 entries in the CaringBridge guest book offered prayers and good wishes.

Staff writer Leslie Postal contributed to this report. sjacobson@tribune.com or 407-540-5981

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