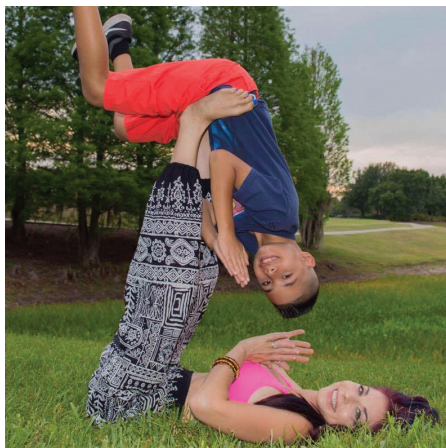




WHOLISTICRELEAF™

A DIVISION OF  
WHOLISTIC PEDIATRICS & FAMILY CARE  
ESTABLISHED IN 2005

# Crohn's Disease Proves No Match for Florida Woman



## The word 'health' means different things to different people.

A person's definition is based largely on their perspective or viewpoint. We naturally expect some areas of our health to decline with age. However, our youth is

***"I wanted Dr. Berger to help me become all-natural, safely."***

supposed to be a time of vibrancy and a time of health and wellness. For Lauren Leiva of Tampa, 'health' was something other people had. Diagnosed with Crohn's disease at 13, Lauren's life was a constant fight for survival.

Crohn's disease is an inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) that causes abdominal pain, diarrhea, weight loss, anemia, and fatigue. While some people with Crohn's can live symptom-free, others, like Lauren, can have severe, chronic symptoms that never go away.

"As a kid at school, I could never just go to the bathroom like everyone else," said Lauren. "I had to have bath-

room exceptions that permitted me to go at a moment's notice. I also had to have exceptions so I could eat if I began to feel nauseous. The other kids knew what was wrong with me. This was my life."

Lauren's severe pain was only minimally improved with the many medications her doctors prescribed. She turned to yoga and meditation as a way to help bring her body and mind together to reduce the pain she felt. Eventually, she decided to become a personal trainer and entered the physical therapy program at Nova Southeastern University.

This new perspective on health led her to become a patient of Dr. David Berger's of Wholistic Pediatrics & Family Care, whom also has been seeing her sons.

"I was on 6-Mercaptopurine, Humira and a bunch of other medications that were causing me to have bad side effects," said Lauren. "I wanted Dr. Berger to help me become all-natural, safely."

Lauren hit her lowest point in 2016 when she developed an abdominal abscess while 16 weeks pregnant. The abscess was located on top of her uterus, and needed to be removed quickly, but was too risky to do while she was pregnant.

Faced with the decision of her life, Lauren decided to continue with the pregnancy despite the recommendation of her gastrointestinal doctors to abort.

Her abscess was drained, but during the procedure, her intestines were accidentally cut. Lauren developed

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## About David Berger, MD, FAAP



Dr. David Berger ("Dr. David"), a Board Certified Pediatrician with over 20 years of experience as a clinician, has developed a national reputation in wholistic pediatric primary care. Dr. David is considered Tampa Bay area's leading authority on medical cannabis for adults and children and is one of the nation's most experienced pediatricians using medical cannabis to help facilitate the treatment of children with chronic conditions.

Dr. David graduated from The Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1994 and completed his pediatric residency at the University of South Florida/Tampa General Hospital where he first began utilizing wholistic therapies. Dr. David has been in private practice since 1997 and in 2005 opened Wholistic Pediatrics & Family Care, his medical practice in Tampa, Florida. In 2010, Dr. David was appointed Assistant Professor at the University of South Florida College of Nursing. In 2016, he launched Wholistic ReLeaf to help qualified patients become certified to use medical cannabis.

sepsis, enterocutaneous fistulas formed, and her body began leaking fecal waste. She required extensive medical intervention, including a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) line for delivering antibiotic medication and Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN) for nutritional support. Lauren's health was rapidly declining.

With the mantra, "I can," Lauren fought for her life, and she fought for her family and unborn child.

In and out of the hospital for the duration of her pregnancy, Lauren gave birth to a healthy son at 32 weeks gestation in September 2016. She was then transferred to the Cleveland Clinic for surgery.

Following surgery, Lauren knew that giving up wasn't an option and that change was a requirement for improvement. Once medical cannabis was approved in the state of Florida, she made an appointment with Dr. Berger's clinic to become certified for medical cannabis treatment.

"I knew Lauren for years as an energetic and active person with a wonderful disposition, but when she came in for the appointment, I had never seen her look so sick and sad," said David Berger, MD.

Following certification, in March 2017 she began taking both oral THC and CBD and noticed an immediate improvement. Over the next few months, her dose was increased to include inhaled THC and CBD as well.

"I never wanted to eat a lot because of the pain that came along with it," said Lauren. "I now enjoy my food and have gained weight and am sleeping soundly for six hours at a time, which hasn't happened since I was 15 years old."

Pain is a constant concern for people with Crohn's disease. With medical cannabis, Lauren's pain is significantly improved. While acute flare-ups still occur, they can be controlled with

cannabis, and only rarely does Lauren need to take prescription painkillers.

"I have never had as little pain in my life as I do now," said Lauren. "I am at my happiest point."

Now 33, Lauren went on to complete her degree and is a doctor of physical therapy as well as a Certified Personal Trainer and Fitness Nutrition Specialist through the National Academy of Sports Medicine. Her Tampa company, The Exerscience Center, embodies the fighting spirit that has propelled Lauren to the fitness and health she has today.

After seeing Lauren recently for a follow-up appointment, Dr. Berger was amazed at her transformation.

"Lauren looks vibrant, healthy and happy and ready to take on the world," said Dr. Berger. "You would never know she has gone through so much by looking at her."

To learn more about Lauren or her company, The Exerscience Center, visit them online at <http://www.theexersciencecenter.com/> or check out their Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/myhempcenter>.



## About Wholistic ReLeaf

Wholistic ReLeaf, founded in 2016 by Dr. David Berger of Wholistic Pediatric and Family Care, empowers families and patients to choose the best treatment approach available for their medical condition. The mission of Wholistic ReLeaf is to evaluate and certify qualified patients who meet the State of Florida legal requirements for receiving medical cannabis and provide medical cannabis management and dosing consultations to patients certified by other Florida physicians. Wholistic ReLeaf is committed to providing patients with the best possible care, while also complying with the ever-shifting legal landscape of medical cannabis in the State of Florida.

For more information, or to find out if you or someone you know may be eligible to use medical cannabis as part of a customized treatment plan, visit [www.WholisticReLeaf.com](http://www.WholisticReLeaf.com).