

Woman with flesh-eating disease takes own breaths

21 May 2012, By JEFF MARTIN , Associated Press



This undated photo provided by the family shows Aimee Copeland, the 24-year-old Georgia graduate student fighting to survive a flesh-eating bacterial infection. Copeland has learned she will lose her hands and remaining foot, and responded by saying "Let's do this." Her father recounted the conversation in an update on his Facebook page Friday, May 18, 2012. Andy Copeland wrote about the difficult talk he had a day earlier with his daughter Aimee. The 24-year-old woman contracted the bacteria after an accident. (AP Photo/Copeland Family)

(AP) -- The father of a young Georgia woman fighting a flesh-eating bacteria says his daughter is now breathing on her own.

Aimee Copeland was taken off of a ventilator for several hours, representing the latest milestone in her recovery, said her father, Andy Copeland.

Aimee "is breathing completely on her own! How cool is that?," her father wrote late Sunday on his blog, where he's been providing regular updates on the 24-year-old's condition.

"Aimee is being Aimee," her father added in the latest update. "She's cracking jokes, speaking frankly, displaying her usual early morning grumpiness and she has been off of the [ventilator](#)

for over 10 hours."

The University of West Georgia student developed a rare condition called necrotizing fasciitis after cutting her leg in a May 1 fall from a homemade zip line over a river.

She's since had most of her left leg amputated. Her father said she was told late last week that her hands and remaining foot would also need to be amputated.

Her recovery has led to well wishes from across the globe, and Andy Copeland said in his latest update that he's grateful for the outpouring of concern.

"The level of prayer and support has been phenomenal and we intend to read every card and send thank you cards for every gift," he wrote.

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