Cancer predisposition in children: genetics, phenotypes & screening

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About the author
Saskia Hopman was born in Alkmaar on December 30th 1979. She went to high school at the Bonhoeffer College in Castricum, where she passed her pre-university education (A-levels) in 1998. In the same year, she started her studies Biomedical Sciences at the University of Amsterdam. In 2000 she started Medical School at the University of Amsterdam in parallel to her study Biomedical Sciences. As a medical student, she worked as a nursing aid in a nursing home and standard home care services and as an employee for venous punctures and ECGs in the Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam. In the holidays she worked as a volunteer on summer camps for autistic children, mentally challenged persons and childhood cancer patients in the Netherlands, Germany and Canada respectively. During her studies, she did a clinical elective in Ubombo, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. Under the supervision of Prof. Rogier Versteeg and Prof. Raoul Hennekam, she performed a 4-months research project on DKK1 expression in neuroblastoma cell lines in the Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam. She wrote her Biomedical Sciences undergraduate thesis on the origin of neural tube defects and the involvement of folate and vitamin A in disease etiology. Under the supervision of Prof. Judith Hall and dr Patrice Eydoux, she worked on a 6-months cytogenetic research project characterizing a clonal reciprocal translocation in a patient with dyskeratosis congenita in Vancouver, Canada. For this project, she received a student scholarship of the Dutch Cancer Society. In 2005, she obtained her Master degree in Biomedical Sciences, followed by her medical degree in 2007. After 6 months of residency in Pediatrics at the “Flevoziekenhuis” in Almere, she started working on her PhD project in the Emma Children’s Hospital/Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam under supervision of Prof. Huib Caron, Prof. Raoul Hennekam and Dr Merks, resulting in this thesis. In August 2013, she started working as a resident in Clinical Genetics at the University Medical Center Utrecht. As of February 2014, she works as a resident in training at the Department of Clinical Genetics of the University Medical Center Utrecht, under supervision of Prof. Nine Knoers. Saskia lives together with her husband Stefan and their daughter Cato in Amsterdam. They soon will move to Zeist where they hope to welcome their second child in the summer of 2014.