

Amazing op that transformed youngster

# REBECCA: GIRL WHO WAS GIVEN BACK HER FACE

Rebecca Lindsay underwent an amazing operation to remove an egg-sized tumour on her face



**T**HIS is six-year-old Rebecca Lindsay, who is proud to show off her good looks. But behind the Glasgow youngster's pretty smile is an amazing tale of courage.

For she needed risky surgery to remove an egg-sized tumour on her nose and forehead that obscured her vision.

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Brave six-year-old tells how doctors have turned her life around

# When I look in the mirror now it makes me so happy

By LAURA COVENTRY

WHEN six-year-old Rebecca Lindsay looks in the mirror she can hardly believe the pretty face in the reflection is hers.

But thanks to amazing surgery and Rebecca's courage, her once-disfigured face is now a picture of beauty.

At the age of two, Rebecca had an egg-sized tumour on her nose and forehead, which obscured her vision and drew stares from strangers.

It also put her life at risk.

Although benign, Rebecca's tumour did not shrink with medication and even the slightest knock could lead to

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REBECCA LINDSAY, 6

uncontrollable bleeding, which meant she couldn't play like normal children.

Mum Gillian, 29, from Shawlands in Glasgow, didn't know where to turn - until she was put in touch with specialist surgeon Iain Hutchison by charity Facial Surgery Research Foundation - Saving Faces.

Mr Hutchison, the charity's founder, told Gillian he could remove the tumour - but warned the surgery was risky.

Gillian said: "When she was at nursery everyone accepted her with the tumour, but the staring was unbelievable.

"This was a chance I had to take for my daughter's sake. I knew if I didn't, Rebecca would never forgive me when she grew up."



Rebecca, above, was stared at because of her tumour but now, right, she's a happy and pretty six-year-old

Rebecca, an only child, underwent a three-hour operation at the Royal London Hospital in 2001 and has never looked back.

The talkative youngster, who is in P2 at Langside Primary, enjoys ice-skating, reading, going to the park - and wearing sunglasses, which she could not do before.

Rebecca said: "When I look in the mirror I think I look much better and I can't see my scar as much."

Gillian said: "I see a beautiful wee girl when I look at her. It's fantastic.

"Her face is just perfect and her strength has been unbelievable."

Rebecca's touching story has inspired Mark Smith, of 1990s hit TV show *Gladiators*, to run the London Marathon on April 23 and raise cash for Saving Faces.

Rebecca met the athlete, who shot to fame as *Rhino* in the ITV prime-time show, yesterday.

He said: "When I saw the photo of little

Rebecca before her surgery, I completely understood how awful it would have been if she'd have had to go through school being bullied and teased.

"When I see her now, she looks amazing. I just had to

do something to help other children in the same position and I've always wanted to challenge myself in a marathon, so this seemed great timing."

You can sponsor *Rhino* by visiting the website [www.justgiving.com/rhino2006](http://www.justgiving.com/rhino2006)

