

Health Update from Brian McKenzie Monday June 13, 2022

How Things Have Gone Over the Past 8 weeks since my last Update in April:

First the GOOD NEWS

o The latest CT scan done last week showed the chemotherapy drugs are still working. The cancer has reduced in size by 5% over the most recent three months. It is down from 14.0 cm to 13.3 cm (a bit over 5 inches in length) so still a rather large size.

Now the NOT SO GOOD NEWS

o These chemo drugs have, over time, so damaged the rest of my body that I needed to stop taking them (at least temporarily). The damage is such that of my most recent four treatments, one had to be delayed and the final one in May had to be cancelled entirely.

o May was a terrible month for me. My body was extremely exhausted all the time. Eating was very challenging and all I wanted to do was sleep. The worst of it for me was the continual feeling of being utterly exhausted even when lying down. My stomach felt like I had just finished a 10 km run to the point of exhaustion, but no amount of rest could take the feeling away. Each day was an effort at just “surviving”.

RELIEF from my PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM

o After my oncologist and I agreed to stop the chemo treatments, my palliative care team was able to provide a different drug treatment that was not possible while I was taking chemotherapy.

o Result 1 – The feeling of utter exhaustion is largely gone. I do still get some feelings of exhaustion but they are usually not intrusive enough to ruin my day. I am very thankful.

o Result 2 – My appetite is better. I'm actually able to enjoy eating. For the last year and a half, while on chemo, I almost never enjoyed eating. It was simply a task to get done as quickly as possible. But now I enjoy eating again.

o Result 3 – Some days I am able to do light stand up work for 30 to 60 minutes before resting. I really appreciate being able to do a couple of active things each day.

THE FUTURE

o My oncologist and I have not given up on the possibility of resuming chemotherapy at some point. It will all depend on whether or not my body can regain enough strength to handle another round of the powerful chemo drugs. The plan is to have another CT scan at end of the summer to see what the cancer is doing and then decide about chemotherapy.

Prayer Items:

- That my body will heal enough over the summer to resume chemotherapy in the fall.
- That my mood, which is good, will remain so. My faith in Jesus is a big help in this.
- Thanksgiving that my cancer has not grown.

Thank you:

I appreciate your prayers and best wishes. I believe God hears and that He will answer in accordance with His great wisdom and love. Thank you for being part of my cancer journey.

Brian McKenzie.