

John Tefertiller Health Update - 22 October 2009

Dear Friends and Family:

Wild Ride

It has been a bit of “Mr. Toad's Wild Ride” over the last couple of weeks. I was admitted to Eden Hospital for the scheduled bowel resection surgery on Tuesday the 6th, and the operation took place on the 7th. Everything seemed to go well, and the pathology reports regarding tissues removed showed that the tumor had been shrunk to little more than scar tissue by the chemotherapy and radiation done in advance. Not only that, but the lymph nodes that had been targeted for removal proved to be clean and cancer free. All praise to our God who has revealed the workings of the human body to scientists so that such things can take place.

The first couple of days after surgery I seemed to be doing well-- I was up and walking within 24 hours, and everything appeared to be on course as predicted by the doctors. However, my energy took a nose-dive on Friday evening, and I spent the weekend hiding from pain. Monday saw some improvement, but some time early on Tuesday the 13th I began to experience bloating and pain, almost as if someone had used a nozzle to fill me up with gas! Once again the energy levels sank and I was in a lot of pain.

On Thursday the 15th, Dr. Walker sent me for some X-rays, to try and discern where the gas was located and where it was building up. This led to a contrast study (barium fluid) and a CT scan that revealed that there was an abscess hiding, and the pain was caused by a buildup of gas that had no outlet. This led to an emergency operation on Saturday, and a return to square one regarding recovery.

The upshot of it all is that I now sport a reversible colostomy that I will have to deal with until the follow-on chemotherapy has finished in a few months. Not a disaster, but definitely a speed-bump on the way to recovery. I have just been allowed back on the “clear liquid diet” after two weeks of nutritional IV drips only. I will tire of it, but orange Jell-O is for the moment quite tasty, I must say.

The Bus Is Still Rolling

There is no absolute time line for release and home recovery. It won't be long, but we did not plan on a second operation and recovery. It had been expected that I would by this time be at home recuperating, and without the colostomy. Now, there is time added to the over all length of recovery and a third surgery that will be necessary to reverse the colostomy. Neat, huh?

Prayer

Here are the prayer needs:

1. Pray for God's continual provision of needs in the areas of finances, social support and spiritual resources. They are sometimes interrelated, but often they are separate needs that reveal themselves.
2. Pray for the souls of those whose lives have intersected with mine over the last few weeks. It should be no great surprise that sometimes the one in need of care ends up giving as much and more back to those whom they encounter.
3. Pray for faith and faithfulness to be found in me and in my life. Ask the Lord to allow me to be positive rather than negative, happy in Christ rather than bitter, a consistent witness to God's love and faithfulness rather than one whose response to life's events raises questions about God's love.

Final Thoughts

I have kept some of my information limited because so much has happened that it would be difficult to communicate it all succinctly. What I can say is that at no time have I doubted God's love for me.

Emergency surgery? There is no such thing, because God is already at the end of things waiting with the prize of eternal life in Jesus. It was only an emergency to me and the doctors. God was not surprised by any of these events. This is why we can pray with confidence that God will provide healing, finances and salvation- He already knows how it's going to end.

God bless you all, and thank you for your prayers. Please keep them coming!

With my face looking to Jesus,

John T.