Conquering Hep C Patients; Where Are They Now?

January 25, 2017 By Connie M. Welch

Have you ever wondered how Hep C patients who have gone through Hep C treatment are doing? Where are they now?

Hep C patients can have varying degrees of liver damage, have other medical conditions, be liver transplant recipients, or experienced post Hep C treatment side effects, etc…but how are they doing after a long period of time?

We thought it would be great to hear from patients who have conquered Hep C and see how they are doing.

Hep C patient Suzanne has been a Hep C Warrior for many years. She first shared her treatment story with us back in 2014. Let's pull up a chair and check in with Suzanne to see where she is now.

Connie: Suzanne, Wow, can you believe so much time has passed since your treatment? Can you share what Hep C treatment meds you did last and what were your results?

Suzanne: Yes. I was genotype 2. The last treatment I completed was Sovaldi and Ribavirin. I began treatment December 31, 2013 and completed in March 2014 which was 12 weeks. My first post treatment blood work was done in March of 2014. I showed to be Non-Detected for Hep C.

Connie: How long have you been Non-Detected/Cured from Hep C?

Suzanne: I've been Non-Detected since March of 2014 and officially cured in June 2014 (after receiving SVR 12 post treatment).

Note: SVR12 means sustained virologic response (the patient has not shown Hep C virus detected in the blood 12 weeks after treatment has been completed).

Connie: That is fantastic Suzanne. Congratulations! I know this was a huge relief for you to receive the cure.

Connie: How long did it take for you to recover from treatment?

Suzanne: I did not recover right away like I expected. I "took off" too quickly and didn't give my

body time to recuperate. I finally began backing up and slowly began my daily activities. I did find out I still needed a break during the day so I did take my power naps. I began exercising again and increasing that as tolerated. I believe it took about 3 months to feel good again. Each person is different.

Connie: What stage of liver damage/if any does your doctor say you currently have?

Suzanne: I currently have stage 4 cirrhosis and have my up and downs but am blessed because my doctor said I am holding my own. I've felt good and was released for 6 months which is a first.

Connie: Are you following a special diet, and taking special medications for cirrhosis? Also what general health steps are you doing?

Suzanne: I take care of myself and still am on a diet that is good for my liver. I continue to drink a lot of water and picked up several good tips on Life Beyond Hep C. I've been working with a physical therapist in the water to regain my strength and to firm up as well. I do take 2 medications primarily for brain fog since I occasionally battle with that. I take Xifaxan and Lactulose.

Connie: How do you feel now? Do you feel like you have any physical limitations since you've gone through Hep C treatment?

Suzanne: I feel better now than I have felt in over a year. My energy level is up as well. I do not have any limitations other than no alcohol.

Connie: What activities or hobbies do you enjoy?

Suzanne: My favorite hobby is planting flowers and working in the yard. It's a chance for me to talk to God in a different way looking around at all the beautiful things he has made. I have a passion for people, mostly the elderly in our church. I like to drop in on them and bring flowers and put a smile on their face. Wherever God needs me I will go.

Connie: That is so wonderful. You've turned your passion into a wonderful outreach to others. Do you have any advice for other Hep C patients who have not yet done treatment or been cured yet?

Suzanne: I could write a book on this question. The most important thing to me was having a support group lined up. I had 3 months notice before treatment began and I used every bit of it getting ready. I alerted my pastor and friends at church first.

The drug Sovaldi had not been FDA approved at the time so the minute it was approved my pharmacy ordered the medicine for me. Gilead picked up the financial difference.

I had already been established on Life Beyond Hep C and took every suggestion from the website to heart. I had scripture posted all over the desk and bought 2 books, one to journal my days and later needed a thankfulness journal for those not so good days.

I leaned on Jesus and my relationship with Him today is much stronger. I recommend do not try to do this alone, lean on God and the Life Beyond Hep C website.

Connie: That is so awesome Suzanne. Thank you for sharing your post Hep C treatment experience with us. Congratulations again for receiving the cure and your special anniversary mile marker this month.

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