Conquering Hepatitis C Patients; How are they now? With Hep C patient Paul

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Have you ever wondered how Hep C patients who have gone through Hep C treatment are doing? How 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.

For Hep C Warrior Paul, his last hepatitis C treatment was not his first rodeo. His prior hepatitis C treatment was with older medications that unfortunately failed. Paul shared his last hepatitis C treatment experience which brought him the cure (with newer more effective treatment) in October 2015. See links below to read Paul's 2015 hepatitis C treatment experience.

Let's pull up a chair and check in with Paul to see how he's doing.

Connie: Wow Paul, Can you believe it's been 2 years since you did you're final hepatitis c treatment? Can you share what Hepatitis C treatment meds you did last and your results?

Paul: Yes, my last hepatitis C treatment was with Harvoni. This drug was amazing. Unlike prior hepatitis C treatments, I had no adverse side effects and Harvoni cleared the virus in less than 4 weeks.

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

Paul: Since August 2015.

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

Paul: Well, Harvoni is known for being much easier to take than earlier drugs so I was not surprised when treatment did not make me feel any worse. What I did not expect was that the drug starting making me feel better by the time I was only half way through treatment. This was because the virus cleared during the first month so my body was no longer fighting hepatitis C the last two month of treatment.

Connie: Congratulations Paul. What great results! May I ask what stage of liver damage if any does

your doctor say you currently have?

Paul: My liver tests will not be performed again until August 2017. I was at stage 1.5 during my last hepatitis C treatment. My doctor stated its common for a liver to improve from 1 to 1.5 stages after the virus clears so returning to normal level is a reasonable expectation. She said it can take several years to completely make this recovery. I feel much better than I did at stage 1.5 so I would be surprised if I am not better than stage 1 right now.

Connie: Do you still continue to see your doctor and have follow up tests? If so, what type of tests does your doctor order and what have been your results?

Paul: I went in for a number of follow-up blood tests during the first year after finishing my treatment with Harvoni to make sure the virus remained cleared. I'm very happy to say it did not come back. I believe we'll do an ultrasound or possibly an elastography (Fibroscan) to determine what stage my liver is in when I go for my 2 year follow-up this August.

Connie: Are you following a special diet, or taking any special medications? Also what general health steps are you doing?

Paul: I don't have a special diet but try to eat reasonably healthy organic foods much of the time. Ever since I discovered I had Hepatitis C back in 2005, I avoided everything that could harm my liver. This included not drinking alcohol and being careful when taking medications or working around chemicals that can be toxic to the liver.

I have also heard that milk thistle is good for my liver so I often take it as a supplement. Taking care of my liver probably helped minimize damage while I was carrying the virus. I plan to continue doing everything I can to keep it healthy for the rest of my life.

Connie: Do you have any physical limitations since you've gone through Hepatitis C treatment?

Paul: No, hepatitis C was with me for over 20 years but now, at age 60, I feel I'm probably more active and in better health than most people my age. At one point I thought hepatitis C would eventually destroy my liver and shorten my life but a number of people continued to pray for me and God answered those prayers. My good health is no longer something I take for granted but a gift from God for which I always remain thankful.

Connie: How do you feel now?

Paul: During the last years I had Hepatitis C, I was in my mid-fifties. At the time I thought my lack of energy was just part of getting older. After work I would just feel like sitting on the couch and would really have to push myself to do more. Once I cleared the virus I was amazed at how much energy returned and it has continued to get even better as my liver has improved over the last year. I am also able to think more clearly, and don't have as many headaches. Plus I don't have hepatitis induced tendonitis when I exercise. I feel great!

Connie: That is fantastic Paul. So what activities or hobbies do you enjoy?

Paul: My favorite hobby is walking my dogs and training them for shows. I also like a variety of

shooting sports, bicycling, and working out in a fitness center.

Connie: Do you have any advice for other Hepatitis C patients who have not yet done treatment or been cured yet?

Paul: Yes. If you're still living with Hepatitis C, please do yourself a favor and seek treatment and get cured. The liver often keeps working with few side effects until major damage occurs. This sometimes makes people think it's not important to get treatment. Please do not put it off.

Early treatment can prevent additional liver damage and health problems that are hard to fix and can make life miserable. Getting rid of hepatitis C has made a major improvement in the quality of my life. It's really nice not worrying about the damage hepatitis C was causing and having energy to do the activities that I enjoy.

Connie: Thank you Paul for sharing your update with us. We're so happy you're doing well. Congratulations my friend!

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