Day 79, Rolling the Dice on Side Effects

April 9, 2014 By Joseph Burke

Being on treatment comes with a plethora of randomness, including side effects. It's like waking up each morning, grabbing a set of unlucky dice from your nightstand and rolling them to see which side effect(s) you'll face that day. From headaches, acid reflux, nausea all the way down to lethargy. It's no secret from my blogs that I've been battling waves of lethargy at random times throughout the day. It typically will strike randomly, but usually in late afternoon early evening before dinner time. I'll be straight up honest with you, when these moments occur, there are really only a handful of things I've found that work, and coffee seems to be the jolt I need to help me. Now, I know some are all for coffee consumption, while others hate it, and others preach against consuming coffee while having HEPC, while others embrace it. I can only speak for myself, and in this case an espresso does wonders. I've also taken a liking to the Low-Carb Monster energy drink. You don't get all the sugar, but all the things to make you snap out of your brain funk. I must state for the record, I do **NOT** endorse Monster energy drinks, Starbucks or Duncan Doughnuts; I'm just stating these types of boosters work for me. I'm sure I could take supplements or vitamins for alertness, but honestly, nothing beats a coffee in my honest opinion.

Another side effect I've noticed is weight. When I was previously on Ribavirin and PEG-Interferon back in 2006, two prominent side effects were weight loss and Neutropenia. In a bizarre fashion, I've noticed my weight increase close to 5lbs while on therapy. I've went from 171lbs to now 176lbs. I'm not sure the culprit, but I will be following up with my doctors to soon and have complete lab work. I'm curious to hear what my doctor has to say about the weight gain, as we know lethargy is a big one, but this one has me puzzled. I presume my diet could be a factor, but I'm not much of a late night muncher or junk food addict. Albeit, I start my morning with a glass of juice and a granola bar, and follow up with hearty lunches and dinners. Perhaps I need to cut back on my diet some. We shall see. I'm going to try going on a diet over the next couple weeks to see if my weight fluctuates any, without minimizing my core nutritional intake.

My weight gain does concern me mildly, but I will be honest, not all days are bad on Sovaldi and Ribavirin. I would say 70% of the time, I'm perfectly fine, while the remainder are pesky side effects. Might I add, all the issues I've had so far while on treatment are easily manageable with common remedies. Over the past 79 days, I've blogged about many random side effects, and given good pointers on how I've combated them using my own knowledge, and a little help from my wife who is a hospital RN locally. Most of the remedies I've shared have either came from personal experience, doctor's advice or my wife's own personal evaluations. Below is a

summarized list of my side effects and they are linked to the specific blog in which I talk and offer help for each. Please use this cheat sheet to easily navigate my blog on Sovaldi and Ribavirin treatment related side effects.

- Acid reflux, indigestion, GERD, irritable bowels, diarrhea, constipation etc...
- Headaches, Brain Fog
- Nausea, vomiting

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