December 26, 2014- New Beginnings

December 26, 2014 By Kyle Jacobs

I made it through the holidays and completed my eight week treatment with Harvoni last night. I took the photo below to commemorate the moment in time. All in all I would say that it was a pretty easy experience even with the varying degrees of fatigue throughout the eight weeks.

I did see the doctor on December 18, 2014 to have a final set of labs done just prior to completing treatment to make sure everything was still looking good. The doctor said I really didn't need to since I had already achieved undetectable levels prior to the four week mark but was more than willing to do the tests for my peace of mind. I was still undetectable! My ALT was about the same as last time at 49 with the high end of the normal range being 46. That's certainly a huge improvement from 703 that I had a year ago but I was hoping that it would have been in the normal range.

I have been thinking quite a bit about what's next for me. Hopefully I will continue to remain undetectable in the coming months and can completely close this chapter in my life. I am also hoping that I will see a dramatic improvement in my energy levels. I have been dragging for the past few months and I want to get back to my energetic self. I also need to make sure I don't get reinfected! While Harvoni seems to have worked on my existing infection, I can still get Hep C again and I don't want to go through all of this again.

The last year has really educated me on the risk of Hep C infection for gay men and in particular HIV positive men. Prior to my diagnosis a year ago, I had no idea that nearly 25% of HIV positive persons in the United States are also co-infected with Hep C according to the CDC. There is also a high incidence of Hep C reinfection among gay men living with HIV. Hopefully the progress on a Hep C vaccine continues and one day soon we can be vaccinated to prevent it rather than having to treat it with costly medications and the uncertainty of knowing if our insurance companies will treat us again due to the cost of treatment.

This won't be my last post. I plan to continue blogging about what it is like post treatment and hopefully a sustained virologic response in the coming months. Best wishes to all of you in the new year!

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