Hepatitis C: It’s 4 in the morning ...

December 3, 2015 By Grace Campbell

... and I’m wide awake, sitting curled up on the lounge, laptop at hand.

But this time it’s different.

For the first time in many years, I am not pondering my future through a glass, darkly. I’m not sitting here wrapped in a suffocating blanket of dread, wondering what my future holds as I slide down the path of cirrhosis, end stage liver disease and towards a death much earlier than one would wish.

I’m not awake, wishing fervently I wasn’t. Wanting to slip back into sleep so I can avoid the reality of my situation: that I’m really not well, that I don’t know how many good years I have left.

I’m not sitting here googling hepatitis C treatments, trying to work out how to access them in a country that doesn’t have government-supported access. I’m not consulting with Dr Google about the symptoms of hepatitis C and scaring myself witless.

I am awake at 4 in the morning but my stomach is not churning. I am not scared. I am not curled up for protection from the insults that hepatitis C has visited upon me.

I’m curled up, my toes tucked into my gown, because I’m cold. There’s a slight nip in the air. I can hear the rooster clearing his throat and gradually preparing to greet the dawn. The pre-dawn chorus of birds are starting to sing in the trees outside, their song getting more beautiful as the night lightens. I can see the darkest-before-dawn landscape through the windows, feel the night air as it drifts through, smell the grass and feel the warmth of the cat as he sleeps beside me.

I’m looking forward to the sunrise. I’m waiting to see the first faint glow come climbing over the hills. I am silently preparing to greet the day without the crushing burden of hepatitis C. It’s been a long time coming, this feeling of relief. But it’s finally here.

“I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning to sail my ship.”
- Louisa May Alcott

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.