Hepatitis C research: Is there anything more readable?

August 17, 2018 By Grace Campbell

For the purposes of this tale, it's important to note that I do not have a science gene in my body. I studied history at university, specialising in 15th and 16th century European history. Not science. Nuh uh. I continued on with my studies and became an elementary (primary) school teacher. Not a science teacher. Apart from the past 5 years the last time I looked seriously at a science paper was in high school biology, and I wasn't that serious.

I'm not a doctor, a researcher or someone in the science/medical field. Serious science-ing or doctor-ing is, in my opinion, best left to those who are much smarter than me. Which is why it's so funny that I now find myself browsing medical research about liver and hepatitis research.

I read about new treatments, new research, the ever-shifting topography of the hepatic environment.

It's important to note that when I read these arcane publications, I do so with the same approach a kindergartener might take to Harry Potter. I know it's big and important, I get some of it, and the rest washes over me in a tide of magic and wonder. I get the articles, some of the nouns and the punctuation. I use my research skills to come to grips with much of the terminology. The rest of it just makes me feel dumb. I don't think I AM stupid, but oh how I wish I was science-smart like these people researching ways to keep me alive longer. I feel like I'm fingerpainting while they are creating modern masterpieces.

But read them I do. Because somewhere in those abstracts and articles and studies and endless collections of statistics, is generally some good news. Reduced rates of decompensated cirrhosis. A small but noticeable downturn in HCC deaths. A new drug to counter resistance in some people. Another country allowing more access to treatment. A region edging closer to elimination.

I mightn't get all of it. I mightn't even get some of it. But I get enough of it to know we are in a Golden Age for hepatitis C treatment. We have the capacity (and the drugs!) to cure the vast majority of people with HCV here in Australia.

Let's do it, so I can go back to reading my usual diet of fiction.

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