Hepatitis C: Still undetected

September 24, 2015 By Grace Campbell

I live nowhere near my treating hospital, so it's always a major excursion to get there. Planes, trains and automobiles.

I try to combine a few things when I go there, so this time round I combined my end of treatment (EOT) blood tests with my EOT appointment. Everything was 10 days after I finished taking the last of my tablets. If nothing else I thought it'd give me a bit of a signpost as to how things were progressing post treatment.

I've already told you about the majority of my results: my liver markers, my haemoglobin, my bilirubin. All looking pretty good. The one test I was waiting for was my viral load. For some reason, I felt fairly calm about it. I don't know why, because I am never calm about test results. But this time it was all very zen. I think seeing my liver markers staying low helped.

There are no prizes for guessing that it came back undetected, as it says so in the heading.

People have told me I'll know if it comes back. I'm not so sure. I was ridiculously unaware of how sick I was, so I'm clearly not very observant. I range between hypervigilant and ludicrously relaxed. (I'd hate to have to live with me).

This result was another "tick" on my list.
Treatment started - tick.
Vial load undetected - tick.
Treatment finished - tick.
End of treatment viral load undetected - tick.

Next tick should be 12 weeks EOT. My specialist says he is happy with how everything is going and the 12 week test is the big one we need to focus on. He said to go get a liver function test done if I'm worried around 4 weeks post EOT, but I don't know that I'll bother. I can't change the final outcome by having a test before 12 weeks, so 12 weeks it is.

That's about 9 weeks away. A blink of an eye. A wrinkle in time.

I'm very lucky I have many things to fill that 9 weeks. I also have people in my life who care about the outcome and are happy to walk side by side with me through these last 9 weeks. I have people in the forum who have finished treatment the same day as me. We are walking this path together, although we are separated by the Pacific Ocean and continental USA.

I’ve also been very fortunate that I haven’t been hit with post-treatment side effects. My bilirubin has dropped and therefore I’m much less itchy. My haemoglobin is rising, therefore I have more energy. My liver markers are normal. I no longer suffer that uncomfortable queasy feeling I had. It’d be nice if my liver had a chance to recover and repair itself, but I can live with this level of damage if I have to. I feel good. I feel alive. I fell lucky.

Some days I just can’t believe how lucky I am.

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