I Don’t Want a Liver Transplant

March 3, 2015 By Karen Hoyt

Karen Hoyt is a blogger who has a story about hepatitis C, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, and liver cancer. This excerpt first appeared on Karen’s I Help C blog, February 12, 2015

Sleep is kind of like a thought eraser that swipes the day clean. But, I frequently wake up in the middle of the night and remember the tumor. One night last August, I awoke with the image of big clamps all around my chest cavity. Eyes wide open now, I saw myself lying on a table surrounded by doctors and nurses, my face as white as the fish I had seen floating belly up on the pond last year. I could see my head arching back with a tube tunneling down my throat that clicked and whished while forcing air into my lungs.

I blinked hard and then stared at my chest as my breasts moved up and down. I wondered what it would be like to wake up in ICU with that machine on and my hands tied down. Shaking my head with an audible moan, I flung back the covers, and jumped out of bed like the house was on fire.

My heels drummed a hollow beat on the wood floor as I fairly flew to the kitchen. I stood in the dark. **I don’t want a liver transplant.** The thought of someone dying to keep me alive is more than I can bear. Of course, there are a lot of other things that I don’t want. I don’t want to clean the branches up from the last storm. I don’t want to pay taxes or shave my legs. **I don’t want cancer**...

...**I’m scared of a long surgery.** Any time you undergo anesthesia, there are risks involved. The oxygen levels have to be kept at just the right levels to keep your brain alive so that you’ll wake up with all your senses. Intricate precision will be required with every cut and stitch.

I’m afraid I won’t wake up. There. I said it. Now I’m crying and typing. Dang it. I just wanna wake up and see my family, friends, and students. I don’t want to leave them in this world without my love. See, I love SO SO big and I don’t think anyone else can love my friends (yes - YOU) and family like I do. So I want to wake up.

I’m afraid of the steroids that will keep me from rejecting the new liver. What if I get hateful? Or moonfaced? Or eat myself into oblivion? Or lose my sex drive?

To read this entire blog entry and see how Karen confronts her fears, click on IHelpC.com

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