Tribute to Willis Maddrey, MD

November 13, 2019 By Connie M. Welch

Diagnosed with hepatitis C and dealing with a tidal wave of emotions, I met a special physician who would lead my health care team: Willis Maddrey, MD, a noted hepatologist and leading expert on hepatitis C and liver disease from U.T Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Maddrey lead my family and I through my entire journey of hepatitis C, which included a total of 3 treatments, 2 liver biopsies, tons of tests and post-treatment recovery. Long after I was cured of hepatitis C in 2012, He followed me for 5 plus years, far beyond what most physicians do. Why? Because he cared.

Hepatologists Are Generals in the Fight Against Hepatitis C

Dr. Maddrey is a professor of hepatology and leader in the liver disease field, but he's more than that. With focused precision on fighting the enemy (hepatitis C) like a general, He practiced medicine not only with head knowledge but also from the heart, bringing a sense of peace and calm to quiet the storm for the patient.

My husband, Mr. Fix-It, remarked, "Whenever we had anxiety or feeling down because of what was going on with hepatitis C and treatment, we always felt better and at ease after seeing Dr. Maddrey."

Dr. Maddrey infused hope. He always held a positive, never-give-up, we-will-get-there attitude. Even when the first 2 treatments for hepatitis C didn't work, in the early days when there were no other treatment options, he still held a fighting stance and offered encouragement on the good things that were coming.

Hats Off to a Great Hepatologist and Friend

For 25 years this man has been in our lives. We recently learned he was retiring. While I am excited for him to have more time with his family and friends and enjoy new adventures in life, I'm filled with a sense of sadness for not being able to see him any longer as my doctor.

You grow attached to someone you have a bond of trust with. He's seen us through the good, the bad and the ugly.

Saying goodbye is hard. How do you adequately thank the person God used in your life to help you through such a dark time and pulled you from death's door? With tears.

My very last appointment to see this man as my hepatologist. Tears filled my eyes when he walked into the room. We hugged and reminisced on the last 25 years, the good, the bad and the ugly. We talked about what's happening currently in clinical trials then He wanted to talk about my work as an advocate, writer, and life coach and. . . the future.

He told me my liver and health were in great shape now. I'm free to fly. Completely Cured of hepatitis C. Before we left his office, much more was said, but I'd need a box of kleenex due to tears would spill all over the page.

God uses medical professionals, and medicine in an amazing way. I'm so thankful for Dr. Maddrey and the staff at UT Southwestern in Dallas for their amazing work. I'm grateful He brought Dr. Maddrey into my life.

Hep C Hero

Dr. Maddrey, you are my Hero! Thank you for believing in me, holding onto me through this entire journey and giving me the gift of hope. Thank you for leading me to the cure. God Bless you, dear friend!

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