

My AML Story

Tuesday, July 24, 2007:

Over the last couple of months I had had unexplained bruises, my joints ached, I had only enough energy to work about half a day and then go home to bed. Something was wrong with me.

I was a healthy person, I was almost never sick. I didn't smoke and rarely had alcohol to drink. But now, I felt like I wouldn't live through the next six years to my fiftieth birthday.

On Friday, we had insulation blown into our attic. The dust made me sneeze. When I blew my nose it started bleeding and it didn't quit until the next day while I was in the emergency room.

I had a follow-up doctor visit on Monday and he ordered a blood test.

I had a blood test before going to work.

I was called back to the doctor's office to see him right away.

He told me that I had Leukemia, a cancer of the blood.

I had a bone marrow biopsy that afternoon that later showed I had Acute Myelogenous Leukemia (AML), Subgroup M4.

That evening I was checked into the hospital for the next 22 days.

After blood transfusions, chemotherapy, more blood transfusions, more chemotherapy and both again, I was able to return to work the following January. I was in remission.

Tuesday, October 27, 2008:

A monthly blood test revealed that the leukemia had relapsed. I was back into the hospital for more chemotherapy.

The doctors told me that a bone marrow transplant would give me a better chance for survival, because even though the chemotherapy had put the leukemia back into remission, it wouldn't stay that way for long and maybe next time the chemotherapy wouldn't be able to put it into remission again.

Tuesday, January 19, 2009:

I received the stem cells from my little sister for a bone marrow transplant.

Tuesday, January 19, 2010:

I await the results of yet another bone marrow biopsy. Am I still in remission?

I hope to find out the answer is yes by next Tuesday.

My wife, Kim, of soon to be 24 years, has been my caregiver through this ordeal. She doesn't like Tuesdays for some reason.

Our beautiful daughter, Krystal, introduced us to Relay For Life. She signed me up for the Survivor Walk at Grand Valley State University's Relay For Life in 2008. That lap around the track with supporters clapping and cheering gave me a feeling of love and support that is indescribable.

I'm grateful to God for giving me more life to live, I'm grateful to the American Cancer Society and all those who fight against cancer. It is because of them that I have a chance to beat this cancer.

Wednesday, January 27, 2010:

Finally the great news; I'm still in remission. I'm still in this fight. Praise God!

Please join me in supporting the American Cancer Society Relay For Life, so more people can join me on the next Survivor Walk.

Thank you.

Peter J. Olson

by Peter Olson on Mon, Feb 1, 2010