

Update of 29 November 2004  
Surgery plus 33 days (almost 5 weeks)  
Richard S. Galik

Overall:

I definitely improve, especially if I look week-to-week. My energy gets better and better; my mind seems very sharp.

My primary care physician and acupuncturist are both very impressed at my rapid recovery and with the obvious skill of the surgeons.

Medications:

600 mg Neurontin daily; 200 mg at bedtime and the other 400mg spaced throughout the day to minimize drowsiness during normal waking hours and maximize sleep at night.

No other medications.

Throat issues:

All aspects of this are progressing nicely. Despite a “normal” diet, swallowing is fine provided I chew thoroughly. Bagels and breads still “wad up” sometimes, but I do not see this as a problem. My voice, speaking and singing, continues to get stronger and less hoarse and raspy.

Vision:

No dizziness or distorted vision, even when at the computer for long periods of time. Ptosis of right eyelid persists. There is still a difference in caliber of pupil in right eye, which may be related to poorer focus in that eye for reading. The right eye remains dominant at distance.

Tingliness:

This is the most noticeable of the lingering symptoms. Persist in right thumb and forefinger at various levels of intensity, being best mid-day and worst at night. Occasionally, but more and more rarely, extends into hand, elbow and upper arm. Overall this seems to be getting better (week-to-week comparisons), but the rate of improvement seems to have slowed.

#### Sleep:

This is still not consistent, but I do occasionally get good nights of seven or so hours. I tend to sleep well early in the night, but then am often wakeful from 3AM or so onward. I am trying to adjust the pattern of medication to not have 3-7AM as the only time that the Neurontin is not active in my body.

#### Feet:

All swelling has gone away. The penchant for them to be cold and achy has also gotten much better.

#### Other aches and pains:

My breastbone is a bit sore from the rubbing of the cervical collar. I have occasional discomfort (ache or burning) of my left shoulder blade; this started only a few days ago when I reached for a pot in the dish drainer. I assume this is not related to the incisions and is not serious.

#### Next steps:

I have appointments at MSKCC 8/9 December (surgery + 6 wks).  
I have a tentative set of appointments with Dr. Norbert Liebsch at Mass General 14/15 December.  
Radiation therapy will start early in 2005, either 3 or 10 January.