A New Year, A New Cure?

January 2, 2011 By Shawn Decker

It's the new year and I'm *still* not cured of HIV, dammit. I ended 2010 with a good amount of t-cells intact, but still the elusive cure is far from my grasp, despite the reports on the "Berlin Patient", a man who has been seemingly cured of HIV for three years via a bone marrow transplant.

All the scientific details can be found here, to avoid my botching of them.

I remember hearing about the Berlin patient a couple of years ago when he first tested negative for HIV after the procedure was done. Now that he has come forward and continues to test negative, people outside of the AIDS community are hearing about this and getting excited. I've had several friends send me the link to the story, and I'm happy that people are hopeful that this could help me. Maybe it will, but not anytime soon, since that particular procedure would only cure of me of HIV because it would kill it's host- namely me.

But the science and information gathered, if pursued, could hold the key to a cure.

My main priority in extending my longer-than-expected journey on this planet is to keep doing what I'm doing. Of course, like most, I could take better care of myself, and now that I'm in my mid-thirties I do have to pay more attention to things like diet and exercise and cholesterol levels. It's not as dramatic as my previous medical concerns- and I'm not saying that HIV is no longer a concern in my life, as it is- but the chance that any of those things could sneak up on me is a possibility.

When/if a cure- or better treatment, or whatever is next- comes in a decade, or two, or three, I want to be in the best position possible to receive that and pivot effortlessly to an HIV-free existence. I would love nothing more than to do a rewrite of my memoir, and call it: My Pet Virus: The True Story of a Rebel Wit~~hout~~ a Cure.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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