Hubris

May 23, 2008 By Paul Dalton

Often I feel pretty cocky about my HIV disease. After all, I am a professional treatment wonk, who thinks, reads, writes and talks about HIV treatment day in and day out. I am also pretty healthy- my CD4s have hovered around 500 for years now, my regimen is stable, easy to take and has no noticeable side effects.

It certainly wasn?t always the case. I once had a CD4 count of less than 30, had Kaposi?s Sarcoma all over my body and I weighed under 140 pounds (I am a bit over 6?1?). There were times when I choked down over 50 pills a day. I went from choking down 36 Invirase a day, to holding on through a year of Crixivan (pre-Norvir boosting), and endured Virecept and the low point of all full dose liquid Norvir.

So, now as I take my 3 pills, once a day, no food restrictions no side effects regimen, it feels like a piece of cake. Likewise, when my doctor?s visits are more about my high blood pressure, or losing a few pounds, rather than keeping me alive, I feel totally on top of my HIV disease.

Then there are days like today. First off, I left one of my meds at work, and I am out of town for a few days. I went to Walgreens here in Portland to see if I could get some, but they didn?t have the drug in question and couldn?t get it till Monday. They called 2 other nearby Walgreens, and no dice.

Then I get a call about my friend Nilda. I have known Nilda for many years. I got a call from a friend of hers today and she is in the hospital with kidney failure. I am not sure why, and it might not be HIV related. But then again it might.

Hubris is basically the folly of overconfidence. Life has a funny way of reminding us how powerless we can be- whether it is a pharmacy not having a medicine in stock or a beloved friend sick in the hospital.

I will find myself my meds, and I will hope that Nilda gets better. And I will wake tomorrow a bit humbler for it all.

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