

### 3. Two strokes

My first stroke or cerebrovascular accident, CVA or simply a brain attack was an Ischemia stroke. This type of stroke is when a blockage occurs in one of the tiny arteries that feed the brain cells causing them to die. The manner that this blockage occurs is when the blood stream carries a small particle which becomes lodged in the path of the blood flow stopping the flow and leading to the death of the brain cells which need fresh oxygenated blood to live. This particle is often a HDL (High Density Lipoprotein) particle caused by a high cholesterol level. Different cells die in different people so the effects of a stroke are never identical.

In the majority of people cells that effect movement, or motor neurons die causing permanent loss of the function that the particular cell is responsible for. Many people's speech, memory and cognitive abilities are also affected. I was spared from most of these effects but do have some limited problems in these areas.

Motor neurons located in the right hand side of the brain normally control movement on the left hand side of the body and vice versa.

Fortunately, God created us in such a wonderful way that surviving brain cells have the ability to take over the functions of the dead cells. As each tiny movement involves an uncountable number of tiny muscles each attached to a microscopic nerve which goes through our spines to our brain and each connected to a separate single brain cell. The taking over of the dead cells function by a live cell therefore could take a very long time unless our Creator intervenes and speeds up the process. In the recovery the victor often feels tired and should rest often. I often have ten minute power naps throughout the day and find it difficult concentrating for any length of time. I am easily distracted and jump from task to task. My son once said I have Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD or AD/HD or ADD) but I argue that I have just become super efficient in multi tasking as at the end of each day all my tasks are normally completed.

The first few days following my admission other patients were talking about having two or more strokes. The person to my left also spoke about having to have an angiogram which I knew was something to do with the heart. I then vainly thought to myself 'I am fit and strong and I will not have two strokes like some of the others'. I had sinfully forgotten that I had survived my stroke not through any my own strength but due to the loving grace of my God. It is no wonder that God allowed me to endure a second and more crippling stroke. I do however not believe in the slightest that God causes us to suffer in anyway. Would a human father enjoy seeing his children suffer? I am a father of 2 special sons myself and know that I would definitely not. I have however given my sons total freedom of choice. After all my sons are not 'puppets on a string'. I cannot be held responsible for their choices and actions. My sons may be hurt as the consequence of making risky or incorrect decisions. As a father I would then comfort them and try to alleviate their suffering. In the same way our Father in heaven tries to teach us by speaking or teaching us through His people some

who may not even be believers. People, such as medical professionals or scientists. Following their research they may teach us to maintain healthy life styles by eating correctly or resting our bodies adequately.

Although my cholesterol level was excellent, always having maintained a relatively health diet I pushed myself hard driving long distances without sufficient rest. This possibly led to my first stroke. I believed I was indestructible.

My first stroke was not nearly as severe as the second. Soon after my admission I was able to sit on the loo unaided. I battled to balance and stay uptight but using my right hand still managed. Because many patients would either use a commode unassisted or else lowered over a commode using a sling hoist I joked with a nurse, "Oh for the feel of normal Bakelite"

Although I was weak on my left side I was still able to stand up using a standing hoist.

From my hospital notes, which I have requested for evidence, there is a comment dated 10<sup>th</sup> April 'patient has standing balance' and 'a few steps' and 'refer to Holywell'. Also, 'standing hoist'

During one of my earlier physiotherapy sessions I had to roll a huge ball with both hands and was quite successful.

After a stroke the normal procedure is to thin the blood to minimize the probability of another particle from breaking loose. Aspirin is administered to achieve this objective.

I was also given Dipyridahole which inhibits the formation of blood clots. Dipyridahole can cause vasodilatation when given at a high dose over a short time. Vasodilatation is the widening of blood vessels which is possibly be the cause of my second stroke.

In the run up to my second stroke it is recorded that I vomited on the 12<sup>th</sup> April  
On the 13<sup>th</sup> April, 'unable/reluctant to keep eyes open during clinical psychology assessment and on the same day had a headache and vomited again.  
15<sup>th</sup> April, 'headache, drowsy and uncommunicative'. Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April started with 'drowsy and barely rouse able. Unable to sustain drinking, eating or conversation. Doctors made aware. To commence IV antibiotics' 'transferred back to HDU (High Dependency Unit) for monitoring. Son made aware of change of condition.'

Later on in the day there was obvious concern as both Aspirin and Dipyridahole were stopped and Dexamathasone a drug member of the steroid group which was given to reduce the swelling around the injured area was started.

Stopping this medication was too late as my second stroke occurred sometime during the day of 16<sup>th</sup> April possibly as a result of vasodilatation as a consequence of being given a high dosage of Dipyridahole. I cannot find any record of when the Dipyridahole was started nor who prescribed it from my notes. On the 17<sup>th</sup> April the first entry 'patient shows signs of emotional liability and is not aware of what has happened over the last 24 hrs My second stroke was therefore a hemorrhage stroke which is basically an internal bleed which

normally does more damage. Fortunately my second stroke occurred in the same location as the first.

That Saturday I was still very drowsy but guess this way just due to fatigue having gone through another stroke.

After this second stroke I was no longer able to toilet myself and had to be hauled out of bed with a sling hoist, a degrading experience indeed. I would often plead to be taken out of bed using a standing hoist but was told I was unable to do so to which I would say. "But I was allowed to use it only last week". I would then try and look at the board that hung on the wall above my bed which would say how I was to be transferred but I could not see that far behind me. No one had the courage to actually explain to me that I had had another stroke or that in my confused state, that this happened before my second stroke or the just assumed I knew

My second stroke was therefore far more crippling with many more ill effects. I often ask myself the question. 'What would this awful journey have been like if I only had the one stroke? When I first realized that the second stroke was possibly as a consequence of being given the drug Dipyridahole, I wondered if I could somehow claim from or sue the NHS for this error or at least make them accountable. I soon realized that no sum of money could reverse the loss of my mobility and the ability to do all the physical skills I have had the privilege of learning and developing. The skills that I have learnt include arc welding, bricklaying, plastering, repairing my own motor vehicles, carpentry, cooking, baking, and sewing. I had been blessed with many talents and can now only give thanks to the Lord for these previous experiences.

I also realized that my quality of life has actually improved. No more having to get up at 4am, returning home at 10pm, having rushed dinners from the deep freeze. I now also have a spacious ground floor home with a lovely garden and patio in the rear compared to a tiny charity trust home at Dickens close where this journey all began

Besides the fact that the medical profession would just cover their tracks and each other and I would get nowhere fast.

Praise the Lord for giving me a new set of talents.