

November 21, 2009

Update on Duane's Surgery and Recovery



Update #1 (November 16)

On Monday, November 16th, Duane had a surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. The operation lasted about seven hours. The doctor reported that it went well and Duane had no unforeseen complications during the procedure. The gallbladder was quite inflamed and full of gall stones, so it was removed. The area of concern in the pancreas that was constricting the bile duct was examined. The doctor said that there was no visible evidence that it was cancerous, however the only way to know for sure is to have the area taken out and examined. So, the "head" of the pancreas was removed. Then, the various ducts had to be repaired and re-connected. The temporary stent in the bile duct that had been inserted in an earlier procedure was also removed. The biopsy results on the portion of the pancreas that was taken out will be known early next week. They did a quick test of the cells around the margins of the area and these were negative for cancer so that is good news. Duane has quite a few tubes going in and out of his body in various places that makes movement uncomfortable, but he did get out of bed for a short walk already for the first time on Tuesday. We expect that he will be in the hospital for a week to ten days. We appreciate so much your thoughts and prayers for Duane as well as the many cards and letters of well wishes and encouragement that we have been receiving from so many of you. It has given us peace and strength knowing that we are in God's loving hands and that we do not have to go through the "valleys" alone. Once we get the biopsy results back, we will pass that news along to you.

Update #2 (November 21)

Today, Saturday November 21st, Duane's doctor reported that the biopsy results of the pancreas were NEGATIVE for cancer. Praise God! We are so very grateful and relieved for this answer to prayer. Thanks so much for praying with us! We would appreciate your continued prayers for Duane as the recovery process will be long and difficult.

Yesterday, we were feeling encouraged by his progress. They had removed one tube and he was allowed to drink juice and broth, plus eat some jello. Then, early this morning he had a setback. He began vomiting, which was really painful considering he recently had surgery in the abdomen. They said this is not unusual and shows that the digestive system is not quite ready to tolerate food as yet. Then they discovered an area of the surgical incision that was infected. So, that needed to be opened up and cleaned out. He is now getting antibiotics to clear up the infection and they inserted a couple more tubes to drain off fluid. The doctor did not say when Duane might be able to go home but, we are guessing that he will be in the hospital for another four or five days, at least. In spite of all the tubes and pain, Duane has been getting out of bed and walking each day. So, he is trying to keep a positive attitude through it all.

It is a one and a half hour drive each way to visit Duane in the hospital, and that takes up a large portion of each day. So, I would appreciate prayers for strength and stamina for myself (Marcia) at this time as well. Thanks.

As the American Thanksgiving Holiday approaches, our family has a special reason to be very thankful this year--that Duane's biopsy results showed no evidence of cancer! We also hope that you all have a Happy Thanksgiving as you gather with family and friends to reflect upon the many blessings that God has provided in your own lives over the past year.

In Him,

Marcia and Duane