

# Liver Failure: My Journey.....

## Where do I begin?

Number one has to be the thanks to the most understanding wife in the world and a Birmingham QE2, without who's support I would not have made it through.

This open letter aims to add one person's experience to hopefully help others on a similar path.

## The Diagnosis:

In the beginning what actually triggered the cirrhosis will always be an issue, but failure of my business and an increase in alcohol and then a hernia operation left me with two years of a life changing set of events. I was not a really heavy drinker but one of the keys to why I am still here writing this is now, a total abstinence of alcohol, which will be ongoing for the rest of my life.

The first stage of recognition happened when a low blood platelet count was diagnosed when I needed a hernia operation; this led to the first bout of confusion and a build up of excess fluids (Ascites) and dramatic weight loss.

My first admission into hospital came as a result of my hernia wound busting open and the loss of a lot of fluid into the bed late at night.

I carried on then loosing weight and many people realised that I was very ill, the confusion was frightening for my wife more than me, I was unable to work my phone, get dressed ,or remember who was the Prime Minister (That may have been a good thing!). At least as confused as I was I was relaxed and not in pain. Added to this was the ups and downs of my weight , I became a person that seemed to always be in a hospital ward or the A& E Department. Up to this point in my life, I had never really had a day being ill.

The next stage was to fix the oesophageal varices, this was done in Out Patients and while it is not high on my list of fun things, the Northampton team were very supportive.

The continued confusion was a problem without warning up till Christmas 2011 (What Christmas!) All the while the tiredness and itching carries on!

Over the 14 months I was on the transplant list I was called in once at 1.30 am but the liver was deemed to be not suitable, so home again.

## A Second Chance:

I have recently been taken off the list as my liver function is better and appears to be recovering and in remission. How this feels, I have yet to be able to find the words to explain.

## Surprising facts

How many so called friends I have lost !

How stressful not being able to travel more that an hour from Birmingham is

How on earth my wife has put up with me!

Mad cravings for food, Bananas, Tomato soup, Granny Smith apples and copious amounts of tea, I was buying in bulk!

How many people turned out to be Saints, and how difficult it is to say 'Thank you' because they will never really understand what they did to help, they are just good people.

I cannot work as I used to, but want to help others, but don't know how (Yet)

Being accused of being an alcoholic and getting rejected because of that is assumed to be the cause.

Now I don't drink, being excluded for the 'Men's Club' !

The confusion had started long before any one was aware I had problems with my liver, especially me.

I am thankful for every day, and feel I have learned more about what's really important, so have gained more than I have lost.

In my case it was the silly things that were difficult, rather than worrying about dying.

I don't remember the proper medical terms, so please forgive the lack of details. To me, as I feel better, it is the emotional side which I find difficult, especially as part of the problem is constantly being tired.

I got up this morning feeling positive and decided on step one, which is to start a Support Group to cover Northampton, MK and all surrounding areas. If you want to help or have a chat please contact me on [david@northamptonshireliversupport.org](mailto:david@northamptonshireliversupport.org)

Your need may be big or small, I don't know, I will feed the cat or arrange transport if these are your issues, or just listen!