

## Treatment Records 2 Years In

### **Medications**

Valium. Imitrex. Compazine. Dihydroergotamine (IV). Depacon (IV). Reglan (IV). Prednisone. Zomig. Alprazolam. Topamax. Duloxetine. Gabapentin. Cymbalta. Baclofen. Ibuprofen.

### **Tests**

Lumbar Puncture. CT Scan of Brain with contrast. CT Scan of Brain without contrast. MRI Brain Scan. MRA Cerebral Scan. CBC Blood Panel. Diabetes. Kidney. Liver. Thyroid Scan. Heavy-Metal Screening. Celiac. Pregnancy. Urine.

### **Supplements**

Vitamins D. Vitamin B2. Vitamin B12.

### **Alternative Treatments**

Chiropractic Adjustments. Acupuncture. Reiki. Massage. Therapy. Naturopathic Healing.

Aeonian throbbing of thick blood through paper veins overwhelms my senses. I crave bloodletting as a means of decreasing this untamable pulse.

If only.

Such practices are frowned upon these days.

Instead, we follow a more conventional trend when it comes to lessening the sensation of blood pounding against the thin walls of our veins.

I reach to the back of the cabinet and rattle the orange bottle in my fist even though I know it's empty. It's the weekend and the pain has reached an intolerable level. It is as if I have twice as much blood as my body can handle. I can feel it squeezing its sticky way through my veins. I am lethargic. I worry I will burst right here in the middle of the kitchen, a mess of torn flesh, hair, fragments of bone, pieces of organ splayed across the walls, the counter. In the sink. I toss the empty bottle in the recycling, reach for my keys and drive to the closest urgent care clinic. Once inside, I offer my name and proof of insurance to the bored receptionist, I walk to the couch and wait. And wait.

How much blood would I have to lose to weaken this throbbing pulse?

A young and trim medical assistant calls my name. She asks me to step on the scale. She takes my temperature, pulse, blood pressure. I explain that I have headaches. I tell her the pain has reached a level I can no longer handle. I ask her to look in my chart to see the record of past prescriptions. I tell her I haven't refilled the prescription in nearly a year because I so rarely take the strongest medication available to me. *Sit tight, she says, the PA will be in soon.*

How deep would the cut need to be to relieve the pressure?

It doesn't matter how long I wait. It doesn't matter what he looked like or how much time he spent with me in that cold, sterile room. It doesn't matter if he ran tests or asked questions or listened or expressed empathy. None of this matters because he doesn't believe my pain is real. He does not trust me. He won't listen to my words about my body. He tells me he doesn't feel comfortable refilling my prescription because he's not my regular provider. He says people come in looking for the type of medicine I am looking for. *We just have to be careful, you know?* He tells me I should schedule an appointment with my primary physician when the office opens Monday morning. He suggests I rest. He suggests I drink extra water. Have I tried placing a cool cloth across my forehead?

## Vocabulary Lesson

### **Chronic:**

(adjective) Lasting a long time, long-continued, lingering, inveterate; opposed to acute. Of multiple origins. Partly a borrowing from French. Partly a borrowing from the Latin *chronicus* and from the Greek *χρονικός*, meaning of or concerning time.

### **Used in a sentence:**

The pain I live with is not cyclical, not constant, not connected to or absent of, not because of, not in advance of, but, instead, chronic.

Friends offer the names they have given their pain.

One turns to me to say *maybe this is your cross to bear*. A silver pendant hangs just below the jugular notch of her neck.

She does not say this to hurt me. But her words do hurt me and in truth our friendship never recovers from the impact. She says this to me because from a very young age it is what she has been taught to believe. It is the hope she clings to when she suffers, when she feels lost, alone, or hurt. In a way, I admire her clean devotion. She loves Jesus Who Died On The Cross For Her Sins.

I am not interested in a God who assigns crosses to bear. Nor do I desire the company of friends who are incapable of empathy. If anything, if pressed, I would say that I am interested in a God who has the capacity to absorb pain. I mean this literally, not figuratively. I mean for this to happen now, today, not in some far-off kingdom come.