

Stem Cell Therapy – My Odyssey

PREAMBLE – OR RAMBLE

When the issues with my knee began to become intolerable for my lifestyle, I began looking at what options I might have for both easing the pain and increasing my flexibility. I started with the usual route – a non-surgical orthopedic doc at the Cleveland Clinic.

But, I already knew someone who had had the Regenexx procedure and was over the moon with his results. His original consult was in Colorado, but he opted for Promedica in Toledo with Dr. Kruse and was thrilled with the results.

What is really interesting to me about his journey? He's only in his mid-30's! He was looking at a very long time with knee issues if he waited and he is an avid cyclist with three young children. He is also a medical professional and I trusted that the groundwork he did would cut a lot of time and effort out for me.

My long-term goals and expectations are that I can get back to my regular yoga practice and once again sit comfortably as well as perform some of the basic postures that are eluding me right now. In addition, I'd LOVE to get back to running. I was never fast and never ran long distances, but it has been my goal to complete a ½ marathon (13.1 miles) and that is my long term goal.

I hope you enjoy the story as it unfolds. **HISTORY**

Without the mundane details, here is how my right knee was damaged. My college boyfriend and I used his Vespa motor scooter to get around in Columbus while we were attending Ohio State in the early 1960's.

One afternoon, some "distracted" driver decided to make a left turn in front of us and we hit the bumper of his car. I was thrown off the bike and landed on my right knee. Fred looked awful, but his injuries were pretty superficial. I, on the other hand, was not so lucky; although we didn't know it at the time.

It took many weeks for the swelling and pain to subside and eventually, I ended up leaving OSU and never returning to campus. THAT is another story.

Fast forward three or four years: I had moved to Cleveland by then and the knee still was giving me some trouble. So, I was directed to an orthopedic surgical group and the orthopedic doctors of the day did what they do – surgically removed the cartilage from the right side of the knee.

Recovery was difficult and somewhat protracted, but being a twenty-something, I recovered. If guys dig scars, I have a nice one.

Over the ensuing decades, the knee was always a bit dicey, but I ran, biked, and lived my life fairly "normally". I couldn't manage more than a 10K without more than just a little pain and would regularly use an elastic bandage on the knee for support.

FAST FORWARD

I knew eventually there would be problems and that I would have to make some choices.

Over the past year, the knee has steadily deteriorated; even more so since I started seeing a specialist who straightened out other areas – my hips, back, and torso – so that now all the issues are showing up in the knee and lower leg – which is where they started anyway.

I saw a non-operating orthopedic doctor at the Cleveland Clinic who confirmed that I have some osteoarthritis going on and that, while the knee joint itself is in decent shape, the place where the upper and lower leg bones meet are “bone on bone” – the current euphemism for “that must hurt like hell”.

The suggestion was to get 3 shots, one week apart, of a drug called HYALURONATE SODIUM. Going by the name of Euflexxa, here is what the science says about this drug:

This medication is used to treat knee pain in patients with joint inflammation (osteoarthritis). It is usually used in patients who have not responded to other treatments such as acetaminophen, exercise, or physical therapy. Hyaluronate (also known as hyaluronan) is similar to a substance that occurs naturally in the joints. It may work by acting as a lubricant and shock absorber in the joint, helping the knee to move smoothly, and thereby lessening pain.

I actually made the appointments to have the first injections and then, like the universe sending me a loud message, the first appointment was summarily canceled by the Clinic.

I already knew about Regnexus and the stem cell therapy. I have a friend who not only flew to Colorado for his initial consult, but then went forward with the treatment(s) with Dr. Roger Kruse at Promedica and is over the moon with his results.

So, here is where it stands as of today, April 15th... (How auspicious is that?)

I’ve been to Toledo for an initial consult at which time Dr. Kruse and his wonderful “fellow” Jason put me on a GlucosaminDS regimen, ordered 4 weeks of physical therapy (to build up my leg, surrounding supporting muscle, and strengthen my core), and ordered an MRI.

I will go back for my second evaluation on May 18th... stay tuned! :-