

Kathleen Medical Status, 4/25/2014

If you are just reading this, please consider reviewing the Kathleen Medical Status, 4/21/2014, previously sent out and posted on FACEBOOK.

First of all, I was wrong in thinking that a dental infection may have been the source of the blood infection that fed the knee replacement area with infection. They are two different worlds of infection.

No one knows how the infection got into Kathleen's blood stream but it did and because the knee replacement surgery was the latest to implant foreign material in her body it became the victim of the infection attack.

The good news is that the infection is gone from her blood stream and from her knee. She moved from the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Room 2 to the Progressive Care Unit (PCU) Room 205 Door (D) on Tuesday, 4/22/2014.

She has had a number of studies completed and her heart valves are not infected.

The back inflammation may have been due to the blood stream infection but there is not any evidence of infection in her spinal fusion area.

She has been very "loopy" with Percoset (oxycodone) for pain as well as some morphine derivatives used during the left knee surgery. She has left leg pain as the worst and pains from all the tests and being in bed for a week. We are trying to get her brain back in action by trying a prescription version of Alevee for pain relief. She needs to be able to think through her Physical Therapy (PT) in order to get back on her feet.

Speaking of PT, yesterday, Thursday, 4/24/2014, two very professional but small female PT professionals tried to get her to stand up from bed and shift to a chair. Despite all their effort Kathleen was unable to hold herself up on her feet long enough to complete the transfer to a chair. After two attempts which ended in near disastrous collapses back on the bed, the PT team left and have not returned.

Today, we have finished with a number of tests including Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE) which showed a very strong heart valve system with no infection present. The cardiologist team was worried about infective endocarditis and that was not present.

The blood cultures have come back with no infection for the past two daily samples that have met the growth timelines so they have stopped taking daily culture samples as of today.

Since her Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) line was installed on 4/19/2014 in preparation for the left knee surgery and the blood system was still infected, the team treating Kathleen said that a new PICC line has to be installed and the old PICC line removed. That was accomplished this afternoon.

Kathleen is resting and, when not wearing her CPAP, is in the "fly catcher" position. We are waiting for a dressing change on her left knee / leg. Had to leave after feeding her dinner and observing the night shift begin their care.

I had hoped to take pictures of the new knee zipper which Dr. Wetzler says is all staples but I am not allowed to stay past 9 PM so unless she can convince them to take pictures we will just have to wait until the next dressing change.

Infection control agrees that Kathleen should be on IV antibiotics for at least 6 weeks which started this past weekend. We will appeal for a release from the final few days so that Kathleen can attend her 55th High School reunion in Omaha, NE with travel paid for and scheduled on 5/28/2014.

The Social Worker is starting to look for rehabilitation facilities that will be able to provide IV antibiotics for 6 weeks.

The infection control team has worked with the rehabilitation facility at Fountains in Atco so we are going to see if they will have a bed available for Kathleen. The next choice is PowerBack in Voorhees where she went after the infection in the surface wound in her left knee. Third choice is Marlton Rehab next to Virtua Marlton where she went after the left knee replacement surgery.

Kathleen may move to a regular room in Virtua Marlton before she moves on to a rehabilitation facility.

If she has to leave the rehabilitation facility before the end of 6 weeks of IV / PICC line antibiotics, she will either have home health care or I will take her to a facility where they do IV / PICC line maintenance on an outpatient basis. We have used both types of service before and are familiar with both.

My biggest concern is that they get Kathleen operating on both legs before they send her home where I have to lift her and maneuver her to the bathroom.

Kathleen will be able to communicate on her cell phone, 1-856-261-4974, or via e-mail, pfmckmw@verizon.net in a few days. Please give her time for recovery and then PT. Keep up the prayers and good thoughts.