

MRI Report and Spinal Surgery

The entire 3 week wait for this report was met by me harping on about how much I didn't want surgery. I was practically on loop with just that single line, anybody who would listen, heard it. I was consumed by the fear of the possibility of it and I was beside myself contemplating it. Little did I know I was going to be catapulted into a whole different line of thought.

In contrast to the MRI report of the scan done 6 months earlier, the degeneration of my spine was explicitly evident. Fortunately, the cranio-cervical junction was still normal, but the C3-4 disc was now dehydrated, with a mild anterior slip. The C4-5 disc was also dehydrated but the right central protrusion of the disc was reported to be deforming the spinal cord. Moving on to my lumbar spine, there was reported abnormal segmentation with pseudo articulation between L5 and S1. L4-5 had height loss, dehydration and broad-based protrusion of the disc deforming the dural sac and impinging the nerve root. Needless to say, the most I was contemplating was nerve compression, not cord compression and/or damage. My GP told me in no uncertain terms that I should start considering surgery quite seriously. I knew it was serious before I got the full details, she had rang me several evenings earlier to gain my permission to urgently refer me to Neurology. Neurology rang me the following morning to arrange an appointment. I knew it was serious, I just didn't know how serious, finding out the extent undoubtedly threw me and I got lost in my own thoughts yet again. A few days later though, I pulled myself together completely and I got back on track big time. I stopped having meltdowns and kept everything purely rational for my own sanity if nothing else.

The following week, orthopaedics turned the referral over to spinal surgery and the letter came as such - you can imagine how well those 2 words went down - I didn't fill out the questionnaire until I couldn't leave it any longer. I say questionnaire, it was more of a booklet that was determined to highlight every single internal problem going it seemed.

Spinal got to me first on a Saturday, followed by Neurology on the Tuesday. The spinal consultant was the most disengaged professional I've met in a while with really bad communication skills. He refused to comment on my cervical issues pending the request and report of a cervical CT scan and x-rays. He was more than happy to do lumbar surgery though and all I could think was 'no way!' I was in no way impressed and was seriously happy that I had the back up of Neurology to see to before I was doomed. After his botch up I was more than willing to take up the offer on letting someone come with me to an appointment for the first time ever. I anticipated hearing what Neurology had to say quite eagerly before I started letting myself worry, I wasn't prepared to torture myself again.