

Update and Neck Collar

I am now 14 months post-op. The time lapse is mostly the result of everything being a whirlwind of one thing after the other.

Shortly after I wrote my previous entry at 6 months, I symptomatically started declining. I had feared it was another disc prolapse, but fortunately it transpires that it is just the muscles in my shoulder-back area knotting up. The muscle problem is what started causing pains and tremors again but it is managed well with massage and the occasional painkiller.

I still can't lift any significant weight, though this is believed to be because of the muscles now. I don't mind much because I can lift the basics. Prolonged periods of typing leave the muscles a bit unhappy though so I try and be mindful of that where possible.

The fusion is still not complete, it transpires I had a severe deficiency in Vitamin D so it was blocking the absorption of any calcium (all that high calcium and protein diet was essentially wasted). Now that has been rectified, calcium intake is doing its job. I could actually see where the graft had taken this time. It has started fusing at the lower level around the bottom screw; my medical team are just glad it wasn't being rejected. They are hoping for around December time (18 months post-op) that it may be complete, I think it may be slightly longer still.

Needless to say, I am still not allowed to do anything high impact, including rollercoasters etc., but it is hoped in time that when all is healed it may become a possibility again. I won't lie, some days holding my head up is uncomfortable so I don't particularly feel ready for high impact anything yet anyway.

I am monitored far less now, only every 4-5 months or so on the whole. I ring in if I need to otherwise I just continue with life as 'normal'. At my last appointment, it was decided I definitely needed to be in a hard collar for at least 6 months full-time with lee-way at social occasions. I did get one but it felt like it was stretching my neck and was causing more discomfort than comfort so I am now back in the orthotics clinic next week to get a shorter one.

On the whole I am doing great, I have finished my degree now, I passed with first class honours. My graduation was an absolute delight and I will be starting my masters in October.