

## **My Amazing Story**

### **A survival of the deadly infection, Streptococcal B**

**In 2005, I had bilateral knee replacement and the surgery went very well. I went through physical therapy and being extremely overweight, 5 ft. tall weighing 260 pounds, therapy was difficult. But as time went on, I didn't think much about my weight. I thought, with new knee replacements, being overweight shouldn't be a problem.**

**February 2, 2007, I woke up in extreme pain of my right prosthetic knee. The right knee was inflamed and swollen. I was nauseous and couldn't walk. My sister, Judy called the ambulance to take me to the hospital where my orthopedic doctor was. I was concerned about my right knee. At the hospital, my right knee was aspirated and it was full of infection. I was diagnosed with Streptococcal B. My blood tests were abnormal. I had a bladder infection. I didn't have any symptoms of an UTI before that day in ER. I was hospitalized and had arthroscopic surgery on my right knee and a port-a-cath put in for the Vancromycin I would need for 6 weeks. Physical therapy was ordered while in the hospital and 4-6 weeks at home. I wish I had taken my weight seriously in 2005 because doing physical therapy was extremely painful. Most of the pain was coming from being over weight.**

**Going for my appointments, I was on a walker, progressing to walking into his office with a cane. March, 2007, my doctor was proud of my progress I told him I was moving to Lynchburg, April 1, 2007. He recommended I contact an orthopedic doctor in Lynchburg as soon as I could, so the doctor would be aware of my history of this infection.**

**Streptococcal B sometimes can cause mild disease in adults, such as urinary tract infection. These are treated the same way urinary tract infections caused by other bacteria are treated, with antibiotics, and are usually not that serious. In severe cases, Streptococcal B is a serious invasive infection where the bacteria enter into your body and can cause problems. One of the common problems is in the bloodstream. It can affect your organs, bones and joints. It can lay dormant in your bladder for months or longer until it decides to go to other parts of your body, sometimes without any warning. It effects people in different ways, some not so serious and others more serious like what happened to me. Streptococcal B can do serious damage and even death if you don't get proper treatment.**

**Living in Lynchburg, the 2nd week of April, I noticed a scab on the left side of my right knee where one of the holes was from the arthroscopic surgery I had in February 2007. It itched and I scratched it and pus came out. I had developed a fistula. The infection had surfaced again. So my sister Judy, put antibiotics and sterile dressings on the wound and I contacted a medical doctor immediately.**

**My medical doctor, Dr. Okins saw me and cultured the wound and referred me to an orthopedic doctor, Dr Caprice. After a few visits with Dr. Caprice, he told me I needed to go to a hospital that dealt with these kinds of problems on a daily bases. He told me that the University of Virginia was a great hospital. He set up the appointment for me. I am grateful for Dr. Okins and Dr. Caprice, knowing the seriousness of this infection and referring me to a top notch hospital, University of Virginia in Charlottesville.**

**May 30, 2007, I saw Dr. Quanjun Cui, M.D., M.S. an Assistant Professor, Orthopedic Trauma and Adult Reconstruction Physician at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia. I had some lab work with me. The CRP and Sedimentation levels were very high. These are blood tests that show how much inflammation is in your body. Dr. Cui looked at the lab and was seriously concerned. He explained to me about doing surgery and the three revisions step by step: Listening to Dr. Cui, I trusted him and agreed to the terms. Dr. Cui was straight up and honest with me.**

**June 16, 2007, Dr. Cui removed the components from my right knee and placed a cement spacer with antibiotics. After surgery, Dr. Cui gave me instructions, not to put weight on my right leg for 10 weeks. He ordered physical therapy while I was in the hospital and made arrangements for me to have physical therapy at a rehabilitation center.**

**I went to Avante' Rehabilitation facility in Lynchburg. I was concerned about my weight. Using a walker and hopping on one foot to get around was miserable. Being overweight, this was a struggle. I had to work twice as hard because my weight was hindering me from progressing faster with my therapy. I had a great Assistant Physical Therapist, Kelsey and she worked really hard with me. We were a great team.**

**August 28, 2007, I had surgery to have the cement spacer removed. Dr. Cui took the cement spacer out and made sure there was no infection before putting the new knee replacement in. When I woke up from surgery, Dr. Cui was there and he smiled and told me I had a new knee. He saved my leg from being amputated which could have happened if the antibiotics had not worked. Dr. Cui saved my life. . Dr. Cui is an amazing, knowledgeable physician and is excellent in his field and he did a fantastic job saving my life and my right leg.**

**Before being discharged from the hospital, Dr. Cui came to check on me and talked to me about my weight. He explained to me that if I didn't try to loose some weight, I may be facing more surgeries on my knees and that may mean possible infections in the future because my prosthetic knees wouldn't be able to hold up with all the weight on them. I promised Dr. Cui, because he saved my life, I would loose some weight and make him proud. After he talked to me I realized how right he was and loosing weight had to be a must. Because when you are overweight everything is so much more difficult.**

**In most cases, overweight is a handicap by choice. It causes so many health problems. Heart attack, strokes and other diseases, your bones breaking down, the list goes on and on. We can prevent these problems and unnecessary surgeries if we will just do a reality check on ourselves and start eating healthier and exercising. We need to get out of our comfort zone and make the changes. Only you can make that choice. Losing weight can be a positive thing. You will be seeing the transformation as you start loosing weight. In our big bodies is a beautiful person inside. When you weigh 260 pounds, as I was at the beginning of this journey, this is an extra person. I was overweight for 37 years. What have I done to my body?**



## PICTURES OF MY RIGHT KNEE FISTULA



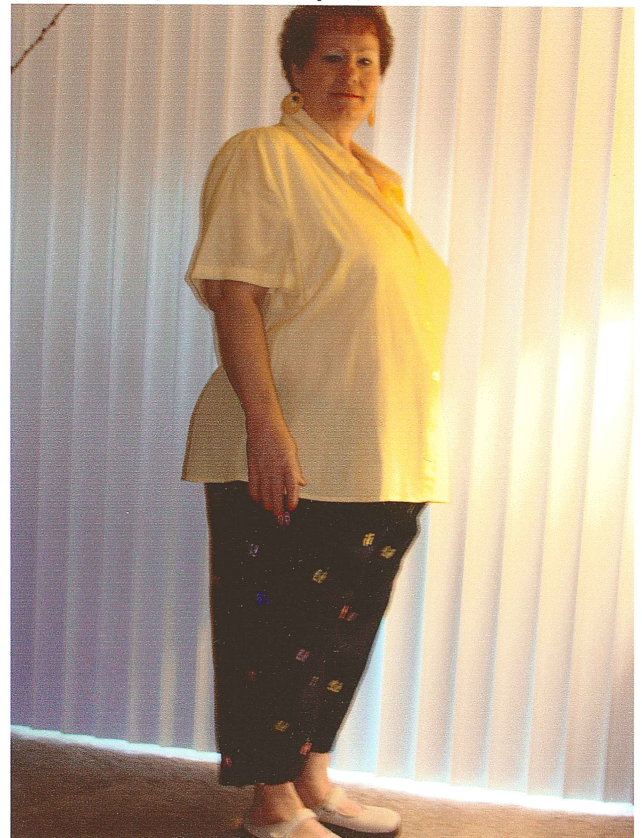
These are pictures of my right knee. A fistula had formed the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April.2008. It would go through a cycle. Fistula first, large amount of pus then it would scab over. The cycle was endless.



## BEFORE AND AFTER ...LOST OVER 60 POUNDS IN A YEAR'S TIME



Dorothy Hall – May 1, 2008



Since my surgery August 28, 2007, with Dr.'s Cui's words of wisdom, I poured my heart and soul into my physical therapy at Avante' getting my right knee strong and making healthier choices for my body. Dr. Cui gave me the willpower to fight for a healthier body and a healthier life. I started walking 30 minutes twice a day and changing the way I eat. As time goes on I am walking faster and longer, bending my right knee straight out and back.

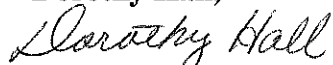
February 4, 2008 I had my port-a-cath taken out. It took a year of my life with surgeries, physical therapy antibiotics and working hard to get my life back to normal.

UPDATE: April 29<sup>th</sup> 2008. I am walking 3 miles a day, lost over 60 pounds and dropped 6 sizes in clothes. I am beginning to see the weight drop off and this pretty lady coming out. I feel so much better about myself and can do things that I couldn't do when I was larger. I am still overweight but I'm not giving up, I'm going to loose a lot more. My goal is to loose 100 plus.

I would like to share some words of wisdom to all the overweight people, myself included, There will be handicaps and disabilities as we get older. Don't let your weight be your handicap today. Eat to live, not live to eat. Let's get walking!!

**A SPECIAL THANK'S TO YOU, Dr. Cui; Because of you, I don't believe I would be here today to write this AMAZING STORY and to my sister, Judy, who was my care giving angel.**

Dorothy Hall,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dorothy Hall".

Dr. Cui's patient