



An appeal for Vhal Alfonso's needs for spinal surgery

Note: Below is Vhal's narrative about his spinal problem. You can view Vhal's profile and a description of his campus ministry at his homepage: <http://www.philnavs.org/alfonso>. You will find at his homepage a link to Vhal's PayPal account

February 19, 2006

Dear Friend,

It was in 2000 when I started to feel the pain and thought that it was just a ordinary back pain. I simply ignored it. Later my immune system became weak, I even felt unusual sensation in my skin and legs. My legs slowly became weaker. My skin cannot tolerate much sugar or lack of it. It can easily become dry and itchy. Later more and more parts of my body started to ache. Even my arms seemed to limp. It led me to consult Dr. Mario Ver of Saint Lukes Hospital who was referred by a friend. That was in 2005 when I underwent several check ups and medication. Nothing happened and my situation became worse. Dr. Ver advised me to undergo MRI. They examined my LUMBOSACRAL SPINE and found a schmorl's nodes. Also, a minimal posterior disk bulge at L1 - L2 with mild to moderate narrowing of the spinal canal (read the transcript of the findings below).

Dr. Ver asked me to undergo physical therapy for at least 3 months together with medications. At first, I would feel some improvements but later, everything would go back to its former condition. I also tried doing light exercises at gym and reflexology but my condition did not improved. And I feel like it is even getting worse. I also sought the opinion of a well known orthopedic doctor in National Orthopedic hospital Dr. Teodoro Castro. He also asked me to undergo medication and rehab. He prescribed more potent medicines. I took them together with therapy for more that a month. The same thing happened as before-- I will improve at the start but later my body becomes seemingly immuned to the medicine.

I went back to Dr. Ver and this time he told me to undergo surgery because if not, I might be paralyzed for life. The procedure will replace the damaged spine with a metal one. I was informed that the minimum cost of my surgery is about 300,000 pesos.

I was stunned to hear the amount needed for my surgery. I could only trust that God will provide through his people. I hope to undergo the needed surgery this summer while most of our student contacts are away from the campus.

Blessings,
Vhal
<http://www.philnavs.org/alfonso>

IMPRESSION:

DESSICATED DISK, L1-L2 DOWN TO L3-L4 WITH POSTERIOR DISK BULGE AT L1-L2 AND L2-L3 PRODUCING MILD TO MODERATE NARROWING OF THE SPINAL CANAL AT L2-L3.

SCHMORL'S NODES.

Thank you for the referral.

Images are available in the PACS for your inspection.

/dms

TRN DATE/TIME
Aug 24, 2005 3:56 PM

ANA MARIA M. SAOLOG, M.D.
RADIOLOGIST(S)

INTERPRETATION:

HISTORY: Chronic low back pain.

TECHNIQUE: MR study of the LUMBOSACRAL SPINE in multiplanar views.

FINDINGS:

There is mild kyphotic deformity of the thoraco-lumbar spine. Paravertebral spaces are clear.

There are schmorl's nodes seen in some of the vertebral bodies. Vertebral height is maintained. Marrow signal intensity of the vertebrae is within normal limits.

Conus medullaris ends at L1. Cauda equina is not thickened.

The intervertebral disks from L1-L2 down to L3-L4 more prominent at L2-L3 exhibit decreased signal on the FSE T2-weighted study. The epidural fat at L5-S1 is slightly prominent.

Axial images through the disks show the following findings:

Minimal posterior disk bulge is noted at L1-L2 with slight narrowing of the spinal canal.

Posterior disk bulge is also seen at L2-L3 with mild to moderate narrowing of the spinal canal.

The disk at L3-L4 is within normal confines.

L4-L5 and L5-S1 intervertebral disks are normal.

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