

Dear Mom,

6/3/81

Today I was back at Georgetown Hospital for the surgeon to check me over. By and large he was quite pleased. Really about all but one thing. Pleased enough so I don't have to go back for three weeks.

He spoke several times about how he likes the color. What I think he meant is that most of the time it is closer to normal. When I've sat for too long or let it hang down, the color changes. I'm supposed to be certain not to sit for long without getting up and moving around.

The leg and thigh were swollen and have been swelling a little more, gradually. He had me on antibiotic long enough to eliminate infection as the cause. He thinks it is fluid retention and ~~puts~~ periodically I'm to double the doses of lasix, a diuretic about which you may know. It is effective! But there is much fluid that is, apparently, visible to a specialist. Even in the knee.

He wanted me to walk until I hurt, then stop for 15 seconds, when the pain was supposed to disappear, and then walk again until I could go for 40 minutes. That is impossible because the pains don't disappear in 15 seconds. So, I'm doing two other things of which he approves. I get up and walk for a few minutes at a time when I'm looking at TV. For the commercials on the news and with ball games, at the end of each half inning, when they change pitchers and when a commercial is on. I did a fair amount of walking last night with an 11-inning game!

I feel pretty good. Fine except that I get tired more easily and sometimes doze off while watching the news on TV or reading, when I drop the book, which awakens me. I guess I'll have to get used to that for at least a while. My appetite is too good, so you know I don't feel badly. I'm going to have to ~~lose~~ lose at least 25 lbs!

Maybe I learned something about what he means by liking the color last night, by accident. I phoned the fine woman who was a paramedic when I was taken to the hospital. She had given ~~me~~ her phone no I could. She asked that I let her know how I'm getting along. She and the man who was also the driver were very nice to me and are great human beings. As we talked she mentioned that when they got my pants off at the hospital I was purple and that this seemed to scare the doctors. I guess particularly until Dr. Hufnagel got there because she referred to two young doctors, so I guess she meant the residents. She and the driver remained in the ~~xx~~ emergency room until I was wheeled up to the operating room, which ~~was~~ and I think was wonderful of them. I had told her everything I could think of that the doctors might want to know and they did question her. But I was entirely unaware of it. I was sometimes aware, sometimes not aware.

From little things I've heard and learned since it happened, really since I got home, I guess this was a close one and that I'm lucky. Nothing wrong with being lucky, is there?

I'm driving some and it is no real problem. But only locally. Tonight, for example, to get back a pair of stereo phones ~~that~~ uses in bed and then we are going for a good Chinese dinner. I drive to the medical lab, to the doctor's office, my local doctor, that is, and last week I took ~~the~~ shopping. The wait was no problem because I could keep the leg up while ~~sitting~~ taking up the entire seat. So, I guess, little by little there is progress. And I am finding that the more I walk the more often I can take a normal stride. By the time I go to bed it is normal.

We hope all of you are OK.

Love,