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I am a 39 year old CPA. It was a typical Sunday afternoon in October of 2014. All of the sudden I had a severe headache, double vision and no balance. I knew something was wrong but I did not know what. I was experiencing a left cerebellum stroke. I went immediately to the ER and I was treated and admitted right away. 2 days later I had a right cerebellum stroke. I do not have any memory from the time I went to the ER and the next 9 days. During that time I was medically sedated. As I drifted in and out of consciousness, I was combative and verbally abusive to family, friends and hospital staff. I had to have emergency brain surgery to relieve inter-cranial pressure. I would rip out my IV and try to remove the tubes in my head. I had my arms and legs restrained.

On the evening of the 9th day, I regained consciousness. I had all 4 limbs restrained to the bed, tubes coming out of my head and no one believed anything I said. I had no idea what day it was or what was happening. I tried to sit up and couldn't. I could not keep my inter-cranial pressure stable and I have a permanent shunt that goes from my skull to my abdomen. I spent a total of 17 days in the ICU and 5 days in a regular room.

This all was a result of having unchecked diabetes.....

It has been a long recovery and I am still recovering. I have lost 55 pounds and have 80 more to go. I check my blood sugar 4 times daily. I am on insulin and blood pressure medication. I keep my blood sugar and blood pressure under control. I have some permanent effects from the stroke, but I can manage them. You can recover from a stroke. You may have to do things differently, but you can recover.

Get yourself checked. If you are tired or thirsty all the time, you are not getting old. You have a diet and medical problem that can be treated. Get help. It will change your life for the better.

My body no longer makes insulin and I am on medication for the rest of my life. I have learned to live with that.

- 1994 Trinity High School graduate
- CPA for the past 16 years
- Married since 2000 with 2 children.
- member of Knights of Columbus since 1996
- Chaired a booth at the St. Joseph Children's home annual picnic since 1997

While I may be a little slower than I used to be I still stay busy. I still have 80 pounds left to lose, I am doing it slowly on my terms. My cousin has lost 100 pounds. While I am not running marathons like her, I am proof that life is not over after a stroke.

Joseph David Kimpflein, CPA