

The Surgery

It was March 18, 2013, and coincidentally my sister's birthday. Unfortunately, we were all at the hospital. I had already had a lot of appointments in the past year, and it was confirmed. They knew I had a benine tumor below my left ear, a pleomorphic adenoma.

I had done things like TB tests, because they wanted to make sure it wasn't Tuberculosis, IVs, which they put a needle in my arm that put something in my body, then I had to stay still while i laid down into this weird machine thing. I also had a ton of blood drawn and other things.

We arrived at the hospital, and I have to admit I was a little scared. The thought of them cutting open my neck and taking something out bothered me a lot. Me and my siblings have been talking about this day for I don't even know how long, and it had finally come. I was also starving, I could not eat or drink anything the last 12 hours before the surgery, so I was hungry the entire morning, which made it even worse.

We went into the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital, and I was really nervous. We got into the waiting room, and well, we waited. After awhile, someone came and took us. I was told to change into this weird dress thing, kind of like a gown. I even got these really comfortable, fancy socks that were really cozy. Everything was checked and ready, I was all good to go, so they took me to the surgery room. The last thing I remember was them

putting a mask on me, and asking, "Cherry, bubblegum, mint, or fruit?" I don't know why, but i said cherry. I don't even like cherry flavored stuff that much, I just said it because I didn't know what to say. Then I figured it was one of those masks that put you to sleep. Everything started fading out, and before i knew it, everything turned black.

Apparently, it was a 5 hour surgery. To me, it was a roughly two, maybe three second surgery. I woke up and I was in a bed with my family surrounding me and a bunch of stuff on me. I was hooked up to this machine checking my blood pressure, pulse, and heart rate. I also had this thing where my tumor was, like a little shield protecting it so it didn't get hurt or bacteria didn't collect around it. I even had a long pipe-ish thing connected to where my tumor was. The doctor told me it was a drain, collecting and getting rid of all the bad stuff and fluids still in there. I was happy, it went well.

I was in the hospital for five days, but it was over spring break so I didn't care much. I can't remember much from the five days i was there. I know it was a struggle going to the bathroom, and it really hurt to move my neck. Also, one word, Chick-Fil-A. While I was in the hospital, I ate the chicken tortilla soup from Chick-Fil-A so much, because it was delicious and pretty much all I could it, since I couldn't stretch my jaw too much or it would hurt my neck. My family took really good care of me while I was there, and either my mom or my oldest sister slept next to me overnight.

The five days were finally over. It was time to leave this place, and I couldn't have been better. They did some final check-ups, and I was ready to go. First, they unhooked me from everything, and took the shield thing off. I do remember the guy who took the

drain out, and I was ready to fight him. He was like, "Ok, its time to take this thing out." So I was like, "Ok." He tells me on the count of three he is going to pull it out. I was there, preparing myself like it will be the worse thing in the world. He goes one, two, then yanks it out. He lied! He caught me by surprise and tricked me. It was a sting, for about a minute, then it went away. They asked me if I could walk, and I was like, "Uhm, yeah?" I think I had forgotten I've been laying in this bed for five days, and the farthest I went was two feet to the bathroom, with someone's help. So, I was pretty confident. I got off my bed and was ready to walk. Except my body wasn't. I fell instantly, and went back on my bed. They brought out a wheelchair, and I was just staring at it for a good twenty seconds. With a grumpy face, I had to go sit in the wheelchair. They put me in it, and wheel chaired me to the car. I was going home. I have to admit, I cried. I didn't burst out sobbing, but they could see the tears on my face and in my eyes. It was one of the very few times in my life that I cried, because I dont cry often. I was happy that this was finally over.

I thought it was a good thing, finally getting to go home. Well, it wasn't. That was when things got bad. Right when I got home, I laid on my bed. There was no way I could walk up those stairs to my bed. I had a fever, threw up a lot, and didn't feel very good. My brother helped me up the stairs, and I laid on my bed. The only times I got up were when I had to go to the bathroom, usually to throw up. My sister told me throwing up was good, that I was getting rid off the bad stuff in my body. She is a lab person who works at Vanderbilt, so I believed her. She also usually knew what to do. I drank a lot of Gatorade, because she told me I needed the electrons, and I ate a lot of bread, because she told me it would

soak up the bad stuff and go out the other way. One of the worse parts was the night. Other than that I couldn't sleep, I had a bad fever. So, I was rly hot, so I take my shirt off. Then I get really cold, so I put it back on. I had to get a button up shirt, so I can have it on and keep it unbuttoned, so that I wasn't too hot or cold. But even then, I still wasn't feeling well. It was a rough couple of days until I recovered, partially.

School started back up, and I was told not to play soccer, and especially not run or do anything to dangerous. My sister, who's a grade above me, even had to carry my books to class and come to my class at the end of the day to carry my backpack. I felt really lazy, but the one thing I couldn't do was not play soccer. I ended up playing soccer with my friends still in P.E, because soccer and friends were some of the things that helped me get through that time of my life.

It is now August, 2015, and I have fully recovered. I am now playing soccer with new friends, running, and doing everything I could usually do. Of course I still have my scars from the surgery, but that will probably never go away for my entire life. I was glad everything went well, and that it was all over.