 **August Update 2016**

Hello all,

A couple of personal items: I got a *My Pillow* on sale at QVC and like it a lot, but if you get one just use it as you would any other – having the pillow more under your head than as a roll under the neck – so that your chin is tucked a bit.

I saw a surgeon last week re. the torn meniscus in my knee and now seeing a PT weekly. It’s a bit better and hopefully can avoid surgery! There is pain but it’s from the Spinal Stenosis, not the tear. I’m trying an herbal product (capsules) called Chanca Piedra (stone blaster) that people take to break up gall and kidney stones. Apparently it’s a sort-of search and destroy excess calcium hunter for the body, so I thought maybe it will break up some of the calcium in my low back that is pinching the nerves – This is about the 3rd month, and honestly I think I see just a shade of improvement in the pain and numbness.

And lastly, I want to remind all of you to remember to hold the extensions of the stretches for probably longer than you’ve been doing them. The PT I’ve been seeing put me on a stretch that’s a variation of the foot strap exercise we do. I lie on the floor, head on a small pillow, strap under the sole of my right foot and then, hanging on to the strap pull the leg straight and up as far back toward my head as I can and hold it 20 seconds – and repeat 3 or 4 times. It’s an extreme stretch but has really really been helping. It’s the long slow held stretch that reprograms the muscles. So, for example, if you are doing a Head Raise, hands behind your head, pull head up and forward and hold for longer than you’ve been doing so. Apply this to the other exercises. After a week or so, if you see any change, email me and let me know.

And finally - You know me – as a Christian, I so strong believe this and do my best to implement it. If you are not comfortable with this, ignore it. I’m only trying to be helpful. Pray – ask God for wisdom, thank Him in advance – work even when you see nothing and are discouraged, and trust – refuse to give up. “As a man thinketh, so is he.” Proverbs 23:7. I have been through the worst 18 months of my life (except for the years with chronic ST) with the a broken nose, gashed cheek with stitches, broken arm, dental surgery with full anesthetic, cataract surgery on both eyes, onset of macular degeneration and severe spinal stenosis, a torn Meniscus and a flare-up of plantar fasciitis. It’s been emotionally and physically breathtaking, but I’m a fighter and through it all, pray daily for healing, thanking God in advance and doing all I can to listen to His guidance and to do what I can. I absolutely refuse to be a victim and to cave into defeat. Each day is a new challenge but honestly day by day things are getting better. The scars from the stitches don’t even show, my eyes are stable and each exam has shown improvement, the arm healed in 3 weeks instead of the anticipated 6, and the knee is getting better. I love this scripture “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.” Psalms 34:19. I hang onto that like a life raft. So – be encouraged dear ones and fight the good fight and do your best not to fret and say negative things. Love to all, Abbie