

THE LORD'S HELP THROUGH TWO BRAIN SURGERIES

During physical therapy for back pain, I noticed that the left side of my body felt weak and numb. When I explained these symptoms to my physical therapist, he became concerned and encouraged me to see a doctor.

An MRI revealed that my brain had grown below my skull and had trapped spinal fluid in my neck for years. This caused severe and persistent headaches and pain. The only option was surgery. But despite the operation, I still experienced constant pain.

Six months later, I returned to my doctor for further tests, only to discover that the trapped spinal fluid had grown even larger. I was terrified to undergo another painful operation. My husband and I sought several medical opinions and then moved forward with a doctor

who felt confident that removing part of my brain would help.

Recovering from my second brain surgery was the most painful experience of my life. I searched desperately for the Spirit to comfort me. I listened to talks and hymns, prayed continually, and received many priesthood blessings.

Through my painful recovery, I know that Heavenly Father heard my prayers and the prayers that others offered in my behalf. He sent people to me when I needed them. A nurse in my ward helped me learn how to manage my medications. My aunt and uncle, noticing signs of dehydration, took me to the hospital. And a Primary boy, wanting to help our family, left his toys on our doorstep for my son.

Through this experience and many others, I could feel the Savior bearing me up and my testimony growing stronger each day. This was a remarkable and sacred experience stemming from a truly painful one.

Although my second surgery was a success, my discomfort has continued, and I've had to learn to adjust to a life with chronic pain and trust that Heavenly Father has a purpose in it. But I have hope in His promise that He will continue to strengthen me in my challenges, as He said: "I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up" (D&C 84:88). ■

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An MRI revealed that my pain was caused by trapped spinal fluid in my neck. The only option was surgery.

