

## **Bell's Palsy**

**I was finally able to smile again.**

In the beginning of this month I came down with a condition know as Bells Palsy. Gradually, the left side of my face was paralyzed. It began with a continuous twitch that I had in my eye and a Novocain-like feeling on the left side of my tongue and roof of my mouth. Since it was allergy season I just believed this was a side effect. Since college and my family doctor is an hour apart from each other, I called to see if there was any medication that she could prescribe for me. Every day my face was getting a little worse. By this time it was hard for me to close my eye, laugh, and eat. The doctor could not tell what was wrong over the phone so she urged me to go to the emergency room as soon as I could. It was then that I became very scared because I wanted to believe this was just a side effect from seasonal allergies.

My roommate and I left just minutes after, well enough time for me to call my mom and let her know what was going on. When I finally saw the emergency room doctor he quickly explained to me that I had Bells Palsy, which is caused from a viral infection. He wrote two prescriptions and discharged me. I was to take a steroid 5 times one day, 4 times the next day and so on until I finished the bottle and another medication 5 times a day. Not only was my day now flooded with medication, the side effects took priority over how I felt. They left me with nauseous and anxious.

As soon as I could I went to see Dr. Horning. He explained to me that the cause of Bells Palsy is really unknown. The medication that the emergency room doctor prescribed was not needed because it was not treating the side of my face that was left with a blank expression. Through the first week I was only able to see Dr. Horning a few times because it was exam week, which could not come at a worse time. As soon as I came back home after school let out I saw Dr. Horning everyday. He tested me for the BRT treatments. Practically everyday I had some progress. I quickly got my taste back and was very slowly able to close my eye. The treatments only lasted about 15 minutes so it was not hard to find time for the visit. It was through Dr. Horning's knowledge, dedication, caring, and persistence that I was able to recover quickly. I was finally able to smile again.

J.D. 5/29/04