

NEXUS CHAMPION

CHUCK CONLY



It was a typical day at work when Charles “Chuck” Conly took a fall, hitting the back of his head. Chuck was rushed to an emergency room in Shreveport where he had immediate surgery for a significant brain bleed and severe brain injury.

During many months between hospitals, long-term acute care facilities, and rehab centers, Chuck suffered numerous life-threatening complications. He had bilateral pneumonia and a bilateral lung infection twice, seizures, and severe hydrocephalus. Chuck faced many challenges but worked hard to regain the strength he needed to soldier on, always defying the odds.

After being intubated for the fourth time and on a ventilator for nearly a month following his latest medical challenge, Chuck was transferred to Nexus Specialty Hospital.

“Nexus immediately started weening him off the ventilator and put him on oxygen and a trach collar,” said Julie Conly, Chuck’s wife. “They also started him pretty quickly with rehabilitation in all therapies.”

Through early-intervention rehabilitation and neuro stimulants prescribed by Dr. Cassidy, Chuck’s mind began to come back from his traumatic brain injury. He was almost immediately able to communicate with nods. Julie remembered, “You could see it in his face that he wanted to say something.”

Instead of lying in a hospital bed, Chuck was pushed and worked with staff to begin his road to recovery. His wife credits Nexus with helping Chuck regain his strength as he was soon able to sit up on his own.

“Everything started to happen so quickly,” she said. “It’s amazing what your body can do when your mind can tell it to.”

After 82 days, Chuck transferred to Nexus Neurorecovery Center, where he continued to make significant progress. He was able to respond to questions and hold a conversation. He was also starting to take steps with help from a walker and Nexus therapists. An avid outdoorsman, Chuck’s favorite activity was, in addition to spending time with his wife and family, feeding the turtles and catfish.

While he made a lot of progress, Chuck missed out on many milestones. A long-time little league coach, he missed his son’s senior year of baseball and graduation, as well as his daughter’s wedding. His wife added, “It has been an emotional and physical struggle. Due to his strong will, or perhaps his downright stubbornness, he is conquering a lot of challenges.”

Julie, a stage-four colon cancer survivor of two years, explained she was fortunate to be with her husband every day. She shared that he took care of her during the two years she battled cancer and now she had the opportunity to take care of him as he works through his traumatic brain injury. Married for 23 years, Julie said, “We have a stronger bond than some people. We’ve had a different struggle than most.”

One of the most difficult struggles was being so far from home, yet Chuck has enjoyed multiple visits from his children and grandchildren, extended family, friends, and coworkers. They came from long and far to see him — from Shreveport, Rockwall, and Los Angeles. Julie said, “They all wanted to come see Chuck in this facility that is doing miraculous things for him.”

Julie explained coming to Nexus has made all the difference in the world. Because she wants her husband to be able to reflect on his journey to see just how far he has come, she has kept a journal along with pictures and videos.

“Everything has been positive from the day he arrived at Nexus,” she said. “He hasn’t had any major setbacks. They helped him get over the medical issues he had so he can focus on rehabilitation of his mind and body. Really, Nexus has been a dream and I never want him to be away from Dr. Cassidy and his team.”

Chuck and Julie thank Nexus and all the staff, Dr. John Cassidy, and his nurse practitioner, Catherine Worley. Chuck hopes he can stay at Nexus Neurorecovery Center until he is ready to come home. In the meantime, Julie looks forward to the middle-of-the-night phone calls from Chuck saying, “I just wanted to tell you I love you.”