

Testimony

Jean Harrison

I implore doctors to start clinical trials ASAP for patients who have tested positive for XMRV. This is not a disease one gets used to; and I've had it since 1958. I know where of I speak.

Saying that we should wait another couple of years is like telling a falsely convicted prisoner that while his verdict has been overturned he will have to wait a couple of years to be released. What's another couple of years, right? He should be used to jail by now. It really doesn't work that way.

Think of the people who have died from viral-myocarditis, of those with cancer now - and those who might well get cancer in the next couple of years. Think of those on the brink of suicide, as I think of a dear friend who decided to take her own life. A patient of Dr. Komaroff's who was suffering so much that even if she were told it would only be another couple of years before trials started, I suspect she would have made the same decision. Her temperature regulating system was so far off that she had to be at 90F; she had to wear winter clothes in the summer. Can you imagine what she went through just going outside? Constantly barraged with "what's wrong with YOU". It was hideous, unendurable. There was another suicide just a week or so ago. Think of the Jesse Gilderdales, bound to their beds, helpless. My own life is likely to change drastically in the next couple of years; what a help it would be if I had some stamina to cope with what lies ahead.

When AIDS was finally acknowledged drugs were tried at a dizzying rate. Yes, people were dying. Yes it's an appalling disease. But we can hardly be said to be living. There are young women who could still be mothers, men who could still be fathers. A couple of years can make a big difference.

Let us make the informed consent. Give us our chance to pursue happiness. Treat us the way AIDS patients are treated; we need to be fast tracked.

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