



Matt Faulkner

Past Patient -
Emergency Medicine, Neurosurgery,
Physiatry & Neurorehabilitation



Baseline

- ❑ 18 years old, ready to graduate high school
- ❑ Top 10% of class, non-athletic
- ❑ Driver's license, part time job
- ❑ Functionally independent
- ❑ Accepted to college, planning to live on campus



Confused and Agitated

- ❑ Unable to speak or function normally
- ❑ Disbelief
- ❑ Unconscious movements
- ❑ No orientation



Acceptance

- ❑ Back-seat passenger in car accident in March 2009 - severe TBI
- ❑ GCS 3 - 4 at scene, cardiac arrest, decerebrate posturing, intubated
- ❑ Mercy Flight - EMS Helicopter to ECMC
- ❑ Admitted to TICU, emergency cranial ventriculostomy
- ❑ Intraparenchymal contusion, hippocampus and basal ganglia regions, on right
- ❑ Blood in occipital horns, hemorrhages frontal lobes bilaterally and near pons



Initial CT Scan

CLINICAL INDICATION: The patient injured in an MVA.

CT OF THE BRAIN:

Multiple noncontrast enhanced axial sections of the brain reveal blood in the occipital horns of the lateral ventricles. There is an intraparenchymal contusion in the region of the hippocampus and basal ganglia on the right side. There may be some tiny petechial hemorrhages in the frontal lobes bilaterally. There is a small petechial hemorrhage near the pons.

There is no midline shift. No significant extraaxial hemorrhages are seen.

Evaluation of the bones of the cranial base and cranial vault reveal no evidence for fracture.

IMPRESSION: Intracranial hemorrhages as described above. No acute skull fracture is noted.

Prognosis

- ❑ Moved from ICU after 3 weeks
- ❑ Admission to “coma stim” program
- ❑ Rancho level III to IV noted by late April
- ❑ Aware of condition in early May
- ❑ Regained speech by May 9th





Starting Recovery

- ❑ Intensive rehabilitation - “coma stim” program
- ❑ Team of therapists
- ❑ Contractures, serial casting
- ❑ Wheelchair > standing > modified walker > single assist

Video: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/n848F8HT6AkNixvf7>

- ❑ Rancho level VI+ after 103 days

Continuing Recovery

- High School Graduation
- Outpatient rehab at ECMC for ~3 months
- Erie Community College in Sept 2009
- Back at Old Navy in Oct. 2009
- Neuropsych. Evaluations
- Driver evaluation - Spring 2010
- Moved into dorms at Canisius - Fall 2010
- Graduated from Canisius in May 2013



Life Today

- ❑ Functionally independent
- ❑ Able to drive
- ❑ Married
- ❑ Work full time
- ❑ Mild dystonia & ataxia
- ❑ Mild dysarthria
- ❑ Central Pain Syndrome

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Local News

Faulkner delivers

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to ECMC. Upon arrival, he was diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury and was in a very deep coma. A neurosurgeon arrived to perform an emergency operation on his brain to relieve pressure and swelling. When he was done, he told Faulkner's parents they would likely be pulling him from life support in about a year and his chance of recovery was slim.

But Faulkner remained stable and two months later, he awoke from his coma. But the length of the coma posed issues. Patients in a coma for more than a month have about a 10 percent chance of living a functional life. Faulkner proved to be in that 10 percent.



2009 West Seneca West graduate and 2019 commencement speaker Matt Faulkner steps to the podium to begin his speech at West's graduation Monday night at the UB Center for the Arts.

Photo by Don Daly

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tinued to talk throughout his day night's speech, she said

Q&A



@HeyFaulkner



@MattFaulkner2013

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[Recovery \(2014 release\) teaser trailer](#)

[Recovery \(2014 release\) - full film](#)

