

Adjusting to physical changes

- Christian's story



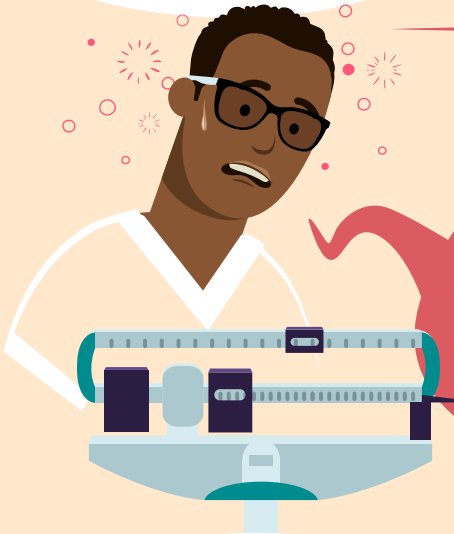
Hi! My name's Christian. At 32 years old, I was always playing sports... when I got diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Before I got sick, I was obsessed with soccer. I would play regularly, in addition to other sports. I was physically active every day.

My lower body was almost completely paralyzed for a while. When I found out it was because of lymphoma, I remember feeling shocked and afraid for my future.



I gained weight during treatment. It had a huge impact on me. I had thought that people in my situation usually lose weight, but a member of my healthcare team explained that it's actually different for everyone.



I'm an optimist, but I'm also human. The beginning of this whole misadventure was really hard on my morale. I felt guilty and wondered what I had done to make this happen to me. My psychological state was affecting me physically and impacting my energy levels.



I decided to take action and get control over what I could, to make myself feel better.

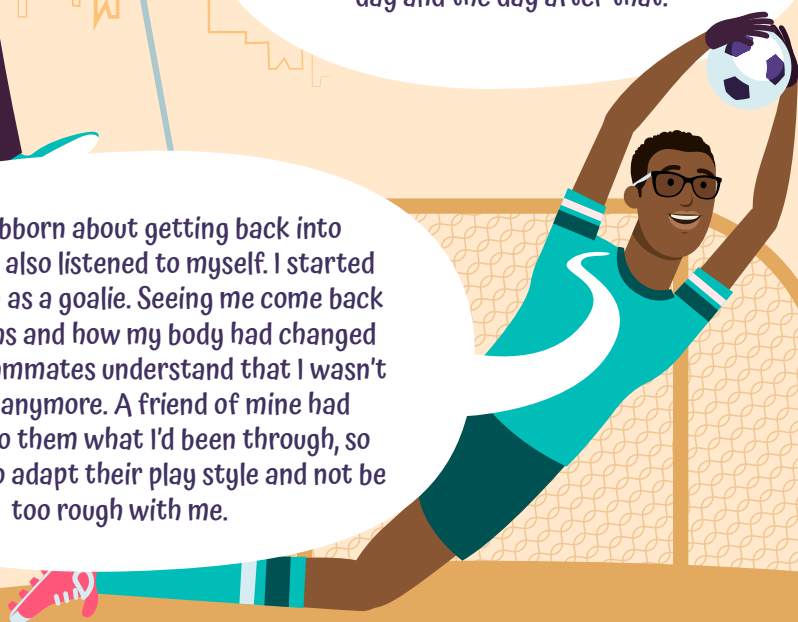
Every step of the way required an adjustment. I was afraid, then hopeful. I had to be brave and push myself a little. When I started physio, I was supposed to get out of the hospital a week later. I was so determined that I was able to leave after three days.



Once home, I traded my wheelchair for a cane. My goal was to get my body back, so I started walking. Some days, I would say to myself, "OK, today, it's not happening." I was focused on my goal, and that pushed me to get back at it the next day and the day after that.



I was stubborn about getting back into soccer, but I also listened to myself. I started soccer again as a goalie. Seeing me come back after months and how my body had changed made my teammates understand that I wasn't the same anymore. A friend of mine had explained to them what I'd been through, so they knew to adapt their play style and not be too rough with me.





Psssst! Everybody's different, and what works for one person might not work so well for someone else.

My advice:

Depending on your abilities, give yourself smaller and bigger goals. Stay focused on those goals, but give yourself the time you need to reach them.

You might experience physical changes. They can be temporary. Don't be afraid to ask questions and share your concerns with your healthcare team.

Seeing people you knew from before you got sick can be intimidating. You can ask a friend to tell them what you want them to know, so they are prepared when they see you again.



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