

Second Opinion Helps Busy Mom Decide on Medication Regimen

With four children aged six and younger, it is vital that Carol Hughes stays healthy, in order to keep up with the demands of motherhood. Yet a year ago, her very life was threatened.

The frightening episode occurred when her youngest child was just four weeks old. "I started having back pain so severe that it kept me up all night," she says. "Thinking that it was muscle strain, I went to the chiropractor. But a couple days later, it got worse. At that point, I went to the emergency department, and they admitted me to the hospital with pneumonia."

Problem was ... Hughes did not have pneumonia. "I knew that wasn't right, yet the physician who admitted me kept insisting I had it," says Hughes, 42. "I work professionally as a midwife, and the obstetrician who I assist came to visit. He said he thought I had pulmonary embolism, which is fairly common in pregnancy and even more common with C-sections, which I had."

Eventually, Hughes started coughing up blood clots. The hospital then performed tests that proved she did, indeed, have pulmonary embolism, which is a condition that occurs when an artery in the lungs becomes blocked. The blockage was caused by a blood clot that had traveled to Hughes's lungs from another part of her body.

While most cases of pulmonary embolism are treatable, the condition can be fatal and is a leading cause of hospital deaths. Each year, 60,000 Americans die from pulmonary embolism.

"It ended up that I had two clots in my lungs and one in my leg," says Hughes. "They put me on blood thinners so that I wouldn't clot any more, and they explained that the three clots I had would be reabsorbed by my body over time."

Hughes was discharged from the hospital and returned to her home in North Salem, New York, where she was reunited with her children, including six-year-old twins, a four-year-old and the baby, who is now a year old. Things were fine until Hughes received conflicting instructions regarding her medications.

"I wanted to make sure I didn't have to be on blood thinners any longer than I had to," she says. "My former physician had told me I should be on Heparin six months, but my new doctor was leaning toward 12 months. Through my husband's job at General Electric, I learned I could get a second opinion from the Cleveland Clinic through MyConsult, which is provided as a corporate health benefit for GE employees."

MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion is a sophisticated, Web-based extension of Cleveland Clinic's 80-plus-year role as one of America's most respected referral institutions. The secure, online program provides remote opinions from Cleveland Clinic specialists for more than 1,000 life-threatening and life-altering diagnoses.

"My husband's coworker had used the program and found it to be valuable," says Hughes. "So I decided to try it. With the help of a health advocate at GE, I filed all my forms online. I got the report from the Cleveland Clinic in about two days. The report was thorough, and I received a follow-up call from a nurse. "The Cleveland Clinic said six months on Heparin should be fine," she adds. "This made me feel good because I wasn't worried that I might be doing the wrong thing and risking my health. I also felt good about not having

to be on Heparin for so long. I thought MyConsult was very good. I would use it again."

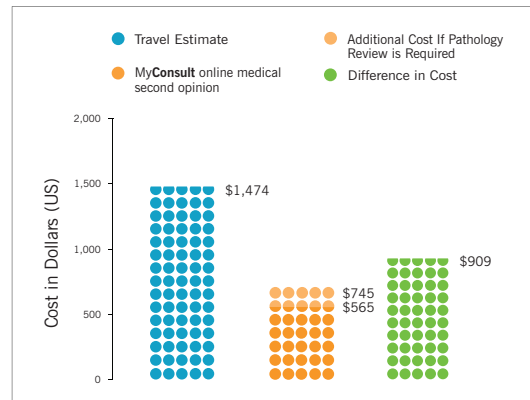
Now Hughes can focus on her demanding role as a mother and healthcare provider. "When I have a break from the children, I enjoy exercising, teaching nursing and working as a midwife. I have some residual leg pain from the clot, but overall, I feel good."

The following average cost statistics of traveling to the Cleveland Clinic from North Salem, New York is based on the demographic information of the previous MyConsult patient testimonial.

North Salem, NY to Cleveland Clinic (approx. 505 mi., 8 hrs 14 min)
Average price for two people traveling to the Cleveland Clinic:

\$848.....	Roundtrip Flight for 4 days
\$426.....	Hotel Stay 4 day, 3 nights
\$200.....	Food/Drink 4 days
\$1,474.....	Total Trip Estimate
\$565.....	MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion
\$909.....	Difference in Cost

(Prices are based on an average stay in the City of Cleveland and may vary depending on time of year, length of stay, and advance booking of flight.) October, 2008, v1



Cost of a MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion vs. Cost of Travel

To learn more about Cleveland Clinic's MyConsult program, visit www.ClevelandClinic.org/myconsult. Registering is easy, and if you choose to seek an online medical second opinion through Cleveland Clinic, the entire process should take 30-45 minutes. You may also contact the MyConsult office at 216.444.3223 or 800.223.2273 ext 43223.