

# The Tumor

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What have I got ?

Well in technical terms I have a grade II Astrocytoma. In other words I've gotten cancer in my brain, and the grade II means that its usually slow-growing and are not likely to spread. The thing is its in an aqward location, its about halfway into the left side of my brain, in the diagram below it would be in between the Parietal lobe and the Occipital lobe.

## Symptoms

Well before I collapsed the symptoms were that I would get weird sensations going down my arm, they felt like a taste on my arm rather than a feeling (I know sounds very od) but this ties in with the location its in with the area its in controlling the speech, motor and sensory functions. As well sometimes I could read a word and get a taste off of it, people without it can get it as well, the medical term for it is &ldquo;synaesthesia&rdquo;.

Sometimes my speech can get affected, sometimes slurring my words, but normally I can tell when its happening and stay quiet for a few minutes, but when you want to say a word and gibberish comes out (no letter sounds at all) its not exactly a nice feeling. Treatment

Normally for brain tumors there are two main options, radiotherapy and surgery. I met with the radiotherapist but she thought the best option was the surgery as the radiation would do as much damage to the surrounding area as the surgery but wouldn't be as effective as the surgery.

So off I went to the surgeon, we discussed the options, the surgery would have to be done as an &ldquo;awake surgery&rdquo;. This type of surgery is when your awake when the start probing your brain, the idea is that the keep talking to you while they do the surgery, allowing them to take more and more of the tumor without causing you to lose more brain functionality than necessary. Its not as horrific as you think, your put to sleep (:P) then they open the skull up, then they wake you up, remove some of the tumor, go back to sleep and repeat till its all done.

However in my case we decided not to go ahead with the surgery, we opted for the wait and see approach, so for now we're just monitoring the tumors progress and when my quality of life is affected then we'll look at the surgery options.