

speaker1: So um,

speaker2: Yeah, sorry. Just so you know, I'm right now I'm in the hospital so someone might come in to the room or something.

speaker 1: Gotcha! How are you feeling?

speaker 2: I'm completely fine. I'll get to the story in a little bit, it's a little wild. (Laughing)

speaker1: (Laughing) Sure, okay. Well let's get into the early pandemic sections first. Um,

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: So do you remember how you first heard about the COVID?

speaker2: Yes, I do. It was around January. And I was in school in Toronto, Canada. And I noticed I went to the doctor's clinic just for like a regular check-up and I noticed that there were signs all over the place saying that if you have come into a contact with this virus, uh please call this phone number and go to the emergency room immediately. And I remembered being really scared, like at the beginning of it. And um, you know I was like one of the first people to start wearing a mask and people look at me funny and (laughing) I got some weird looks.

speaker1: So you started taking it seriously from the start?

speaker2: Yeah, I actually did but then I started to notice like okay I'm taking this too far, I'm probably gonna get sick. And then I kind of stopped like caring about that stuff really but I ended up getting sick in May.

speaker1: Wow! Gotcha.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: So were you. So you started wearing a mask but when did you, when did you stop or when did you relax, how long did that take?

speaker2: So the University sent an email out saying that wearing a mask actually is not gonna protect you because you're constantly adjusting it and touching your face and that the best thing you can do is just to keep a distance and wash your hands. And so I listened to that.

speaker1: Hmm. Yeah, that's bad advice. I remember some similar bad advice coming out around then.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: So that was back in February, March that kind of time frame?

speaker2: Uh, yeah. January, February.

speaker1: Okay. So were you in locked down at all or did you just keep going to classes?

speaker2: Uh, so I can, uh classes continued on until March 28.

speaker1: Hmm.

speaker2: And then after that they decided to cancel all classes, because I'm going to an art school. So they couldn't really do online classes. So most of my classes were cancelled, I didn't have final exams or anything.

speaker1: Gotcha. So then you went back to Jordan?

speaker2: Uh, no so after that I couldn't go back to Jordan because Jordan was on locked down and the airport was closed there since March. Um and then I ended up you know staying there and luckily my roommates have moved out so I had the place all to myself. And then I ended up getting sick and uh like end of March beginning April around that time, uh time frame.

speaker1: Wow! so um. What was it like? When did, How did you first suspect that you might have COVID? What was the first sign?

speaker2: Oh, I the first sign was the sore throat. And you know I, I usually get like pretty bad allergies and stuff so I didn't really look too far into it. But because there was a whole pandemic going around I've kind of got scared. And there wasn't much information about it at that time and so and I was on alone, all alone in Toronto. So I didn't really know what to do. Um, but luckily one of our family friends worked at a hospital there and he got me in to contact with some of the doctors and I was able to communicate with them almost on a daily basis and just update the, update them on my symptoms that were happening.

speaker1: So when did you first get tested? How long after getting the sore throat, did you get for a test?

speaker2: I actually, when I got sick I was at home for an entire month and at that time they just advise me to just stay home.

speaker1: Hmm.

speaker2: And not go out of the house because they said that it's most likely that I do have it. And that it would be an unnecessary test.

speaker1: Hmm, gotcha.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Do you, do you know how you got it? Were you, did you doing kind of somebody out to as positive before you got sick or you just don't know?

speaker2: Uh, well I don't really know but I did have a friend who did have a flu and you know I was telling her, why don't you go and get, get tested or something. And she was coughing and whatever. Um I tried to keep a distance as much as I could but I guess I just ended up getting it. But also I can't really blame it on her, it might be something else.

speaker1: Sure, yeah. Um, so how did your symptoms progress? You got a sore throat initially, how, what other symptoms did you get?

speaker2: Yeah, so immediately, like right after I got the sore throat uh within the next day most of the symptoms were there. You know, it started with the sore throat and then I have the extreme fatigue, muscle and joint pain, uh just really bad migraines for the first couple of days. Am like, I couldn't keep my window open because of the sun. It was just like really hurting my head. Um and I was just in bed just extreme fatigue, just falling asleep you know, unable to keep my eyes open. Um, very low grade fever, like it, it isn't considered a fever. Like around 37.2, I don't know what that is in Fahrenheit.

speaker1: No, I mean that's all it is, that works. (laughing) Um.

speaker2: (Laughing)

speaker1: So, so one of those, what was the worst symptom would you say?

speaker2: The worst symptoms I would say would be the just like the body aches and the migraines.

speaker1: Okay. Um.

speaker2: Yeah, and then into, into that my symptoms progress and I lost my sense of smell. And then I began to develop a chest tightness it wasn't really a shortness of breath it was just, I just felt like the, like my throat was closing up, and that's just how it felt.

speaker1: Hmm. Alright, just catching up on that. So um, how long before you lost your sense of smell? That wasn't immediate, that was a few days in.

speaker2: That was not. Yeah, that was like a, a few weeks and actually probably two weeks in.

speaker1: Two weeks from your first symptom?

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Yeah, okay. Interesting.

speaker2: Yeah, my symptoms lasted on an entire month.

speaker1: Gotcha. So it took you a month before you started to feel like you were recovering?

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: That's a long time.

speaker2: Yeah, it was.

speaker1: So um, did you need hospitalize, hospitalization, I mean you're in hospital right now but is that for COVID or?

speaker2: Uh yeah, it is actually. So ten days ago, I arrived back in Jordan because they've open the airport. I was able to come back home and um, upon my arrival I have to test again and I tested positive and um so the protocol was just to admit me in to hospital and just monitor if I get any symptoms or anything like and I haven't had any symptoms within the last 11 days.

speaker1: Hmm.

speaker2: So you know they tested me, they did X-rays and everything but at that time in April when I got sick, I did not need any hospital, hospitalization because my symptoms are pretty mild.

speaker1: Gotcha, okay.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Um, so before you got your symptoms for the we, like what you have said before, were you out and about in the world or were you locked down at that point?

speaker2: Uh, I was going out actually but not, not very frequently. You know just staying in my student resident building.

speaker1: Hmm. Gotcha!

speaker2: Hmm.

speaker1: Um, and you were living by yourself at that time that did any of your friends pick-up COVID from you that you know of?

speaker2: No. No one did.

speaker1: That's good.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: That's good. Um, so what else can you tell me about your symptoms or you know just generally having COVID that we haven't touched on?

speaker2: Yeah, so it did feel like of, it was a flu. And um the thing that made it different from a flu was that it was like the symptoms of fatigue and like the migraines and the body aches were just so much more intense than what it felt like when with the regular flu or cold.

speaker1: Hmm.

speaker2: And um, it's very weird especially know because there's not much research on it and that each person's symptoms are very different. Even though there are some symptoms that are persistent with each case but some, some like most cases don't have all the symptoms.

speaker1: Yeah, yeah. I've write cause that is, that is interesting.

speaker2: Yeah, I had no cough.

speaker1: You have no cough?

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Interesting.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Um, so did you have anyone in your life who didn't think COVID was a big deal and did you having it, change their mind or did they still think it's not a big deal?

speaker2: No, actually like my, from the beginning my parents kept telling me, you know wear a mask, wear a mask everywhere you go and keep sanitizing your hands and they got to a point I was like you know I'm not gonna get sick. I might as well just go out and live my life and then I ended up getting sick.

speaker1: Alright, um now that you're mostly recovered, do you have any persistent symptoms?

speaker2: Yes I do, and they actually showed up a few weeks ago, uh actually about a month and a half ago. Is the sense of smell is just not a hundred percent.

speaker1: Hmm.

speaker2: Like, ever since, ever since it went away, I just certain foods and stuff I just can't stand the smell and the taste. It just makes me lose my appetite completely. And those foods are onion, garlic or even coffee which I love the smell of. And I know the smell of coffee. And it just, the smell changed, it's completely changed.

speaker1: Is that, I mean do you have um sinus issues also or is it really smell by itself has changed?

speaker2: Smell just by itself has just changed. Like I've never had an issue with my sinuses before.

speaker1: Uh, so life now, you're in hospital for the foreseeable future, I mean what what, what does it look like to get out of the hospital?

speaker2: So, um so I tested positive upon my arrival to the airport here in Jordan and so immediately they took me to the hospital just to, as protocol just to make sure that I don't develop any symptoms because the situation here is very, is pretty controlled honestly. Um so, yeah right now I'm in the hospital and um the reason why I've been here for so long was because I tested positive again. And that's because, even though I don't have any symptoms or signs or anything, like I'm not showing any symptoms and the person I travelled with back to Jordan tested negative, twice. Um they, the doctors told me that the reason why I'm testing positive is because the virus is still in my system but the PCR test does not detect if it's still active or if it's dead. And so uh, the reason why they're keeping me here for such a long time is just because they want to monitor and make sure I do not develop any symptoms.

speaker1: Interesting.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: So the virus never left is just always be in there and there's enough of it in your system that you still test positive?

speaker2: Exactly.

speaker1: Gotcha.

speaker2: Even though it's dead.

speaker1: Right, gotcha. Um, tell me about your flight, what was that like?

speaker2: Oh, the flight was terrible, it was completely full. Uh, there was no social distancing you know because um, Jordan's airport isn't fully re-opened. And so they've been doing emergency evacuation flights for people who are Jordanians that need to get back home. Um, so far I think they've only have three or four and uh I decided to go back home because I just needed to get back home especially now before school started. Um, and so a lot of people were in the same situation you know, mostly students and families that needed to get back. And the flight

was fully booked, it was a ten hour trip direct flight from Montreal to Jordan. And um the protocol was that they would take us from the airport to a hotel to quarantine in the hotel for about a week. And if we test negative we get to go home and quarantine at home for another week before we can go out in public. But that wasn't the case for me uh, since I tested positive upon my arrival they sent me to the hospital. And I've been here since the 13th.

speaker1: Gotcha.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Gotcha.

speaker2: Um, hopefully I'll be leaving tomorrow morning. So fingers crossed.

speaker1: Finger crossed, yeah definitely.

speaker2: (Laughs)

speaker1: Um, (Laughs) So uh yeah, final couple of questions um, what would you tell people who aren't treating COVID seriously?

speaker2: Um, you should take it seriously I mean for myself even though I am young and I am athletic and I do exercise almost everyday I did get sick. And my symptoms lasted an entire month. And so that just goes to show you that it differs from every person. You don't know how your body is gonna react to it. You don't know what might happen to you so uh best advice I could give you is just, try as much as you can not to touch your face if you're out in public. Sanitize your hands as much as you can, wash your hands if you're able to wash your hands, if you have access to a bathroom. Um also uh one of the things that I notice with myself is that I wasn't able to get access to any like PPE or masks or anything like that. So if it's possible make your own mask and you can re-wash it. Um you know try wearing gloves just take precautionary measures. Don't get too close to people because you never know they could be asymptomatic and even know they have it,

speaker1: Gotcha, gotcha. Is there anything else that you'd like to tell people about your story?

speaker2: The one thing that I kind of wanna stress on is that even though I am testing positive I will continue to test positive because the virus is still in my system even though it is dead. So for some people who are testing positive and had the virus previously this could also be the case for them and not to really panic about it. Just to kind of monitor their symptoms and see if any symptoms pop-up then they should contact the doctor and see what they should do. Um, wait yeah, other than that I think uh, just try as much as you can to social distance and just do your part and in flattening the curve and trying to help other people out since the second wave is on its way and you know, it might, it might be it's probably gonna be the worst that the first one.

speaker1: Yeah, it does sound like it, yeah.

speaker2: Yeah.

speaker1: Well thank you so much. This just been great. Um so I've recorded this, I have a transcript that should be produced automatically and then I'll type it up. And once I have, I'll send it up to you, so you can uh what I mean is there anything you want me to change or update? Um.

speaker2: Okay, perfect.

speaker1: Do you want to share any photos? Totally optional but if you do um, I'll happily include one.

speaker2: I'd rather not.

speaker1: That's fine, that's cool. Alright, well thanks a lot. Best of luck with your recovering.

speaker2: Thank you.

speaker1: I will be in touch in a week or so with the transcript.

speaker2: Okay, perfect. I'm looking forward to it.

speaker1: Thanks! Take care.

speaker2: You, bye.

speaker1: Bye.