

DVD Script 6: Breaking bad news [7 minutes 38 seconds]

Doctor: Miss Debbie Turlington?

Patient: Yes.

Doctor: Is that right?

Patient: Yeah hi.

Doctor: Hello nice to meet you. My name's Miss Smithson and I'm an EMT consultant I understand you've been waiting for me to come down and see you.

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Ok. You've meet Steve our nurse haven't you...

Patient: Yeah mhhh

Doctor: From A&E, Jo's actually one of my students are you alright for her to stay in...

Patient: Yeah that's fine.

Doctor: ...whilst I see ok great thank you. Jo if you'd just like to go around the back that's lovely. Ok so I understand you've got quite a yeah that is quite sore, do do you want to tell me what's been happening?

Patient: Um yeah about 4 days ago um my mum's dog bit me [laugh].

Doctor: Ah ha.

Patient: Um ah I went to another hospital and had the stitches put in.

Doctor: Yes.

Patient: Um but I've just noticed that it doesn't seem to be getting much better and it's [short pause] it's sort of tender.

Doctor: Sure.

Patient: So I just wanted to come and check it out really.

Doctor: Sure any other symptoms at all?

Patient: No.

Doctor: Any pain or?

Patient: Ah no no not really it just feels a bit tender that's all.

Doctor: Tender and are you feeling well in yourself?

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Yeah and I can see your observations are normal you've got a normal temperature and things yeah. So you're generally well normally?

Patient: Yeah fine yeah.

Doctor: Yeah ok so it's really the redness and that concerned you and thought better get it checked.

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Do you know whether they cleaned out the wound when they first?

Patient: Um.

Doctor: When you first presented?

Patient: Yeah I think so.

Doctor: I think they did ok.

Patient: I presume they did yeah yeah.

Doctor: Alright. I'm going to have a little look at it for you.

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: Ok, now I need to put some gloves on for that so...

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: You're comfortable there.

Patient: Yeah fine ok.

[pause as doctor puts gloves on]

Doctor: That's lovely. So um is it a dog you know or?

Patient: Um yeah yeah it's...

Doctor: I'll just come around here.

Patient: ... my mum's dog yeah

Doctor: Is it really?

Patient: Yeah we've had him for 8 years.

Doctor: For 8 years?

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Goodness me, right.

Patient: So um yeah just quite unusual for him really.

Doctor: So it's quite out of character.

Patient: Mmh.

Doctor: Yeah, is he well in himself is he?

Patient: Yeah yeah he's fine...

Doctor: He's ok.

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Have you had him checked out with the vet?

Patient: Um yeah we did take him to the vet

Doctor: Yeah ok.

Patient: Um they just said that maybe he got a bit um, bit sort of startled or something.

Doctor: Sure yeah.

Patient: That's why he did it. Yeah he's fine.

Doctor: Yeah. Mhh alright so you've got your line of stitches around the back and then the one at the front.

Patient: Yeah.

Doctor: Yeah, and then one up on your ear as well. Ok does your face feel quite swollen compared to normal?

Patient: Ah yeah I suppose it feels a bit sort of warm and tender yeah.

Doctor: Ok. Are you alright if I have a go at touching this?

Patient: Yeah.

Doctor: Sorry just going to touch tell me if it hurts?

Patient: Mhh..

[short pause]

Doctor: That's quite sore isn't it. Ok and round here?

Patient: Yeah.

Doctor: It isn't it? Ok I don't want to examine that further then until you've had some painkillers to sort out the pain. Alright so um what are your thoughts about what's going on?

Patient: Um I don't know I guess it just needs sort of re-stitching and cleaning up a bit probably?

Doctor: Uhuh yeah. So that's what you were expecting.

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Yeah. Ok. Well um I'm really sorry to have to tell you it's going to involve a bit more treatment than that.

Patient: Right ok.

Doctor: Yeah ok um I think you're right the stitches are infected and you've got some pus under there um but I'd like to take you to theatre to remove the stitches.

Patient: Does that mean an operation?

Doctor: It will it's a small operation but it does involve an operation.

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: Um but I think we need to remove the stitches under anaesthetic and give the wound a good clean for you.

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: Um I'd like you to have a higher dose of antibiotic cause I understand you have been on some antibiotics.

Patient: Yeah yeah.

Doctor: Haven't you?

Patient: Um these are the things that were recommended.

Doctor: Yeah that's right so um this is a really good antibiotic but ah obviously you've been taking these...

Patient: Mmh.

Doctor: ...and despite these the wound has become more infected.

Patient: Yeah.

Doctor: So I'd actually like to put you on a higher dose...

Patient: Ok...

Doctor: ...and this time through a drip line.

[short pause]

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: Yeah.

Patient: So what does that mean exactly?

Doctor: Ok yeah cause I can I can see you're getting a bit anxious.

Patient: Yeah.

Doctor: The idea of having a drip is that the antibiotic's going straight into the veins so you're getting a higher dose into the wound.

Patient: Right.

Doctor: Um it does mean you'd need to stay in for a couple of days.

Patient: A couple of days?

Doctor: Yeah, I'm afraid so.

Patient: Ok um.

Doctor: Yeah.

Patient: Blimey I wasn't really expecting that.

Doctor: I can see you weren't.

Patient: Um but I mean is it going to be ok, do you think?

Doctor: I think it will be absolutely fine if we're able to treat it for you and clear up the wound. [short pause] My worry really is that and I'll explain it to you it's it's so red and inflamed and you're already getting some redness onto your cheek and I really think we need to treat that before it spreads further.

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: So the likely hood of it healing properly is is much higher if we get in there and treat it more aggressively now.

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: Yeah.

Patient: And it has 2 days you think.

Doctor: At least...

Patient: Oh god.

Doctor: ...2 days I'm afraid yeah.

Patient: I've just got so much on a work that's all.

Doctor: I know. Is it going to be difficult to take the time off?

Patient: Yeah well yeah but I I feel I need to get it sorted out really don't I so?

Doctor: Yeah I I do think it's important you've come at a good time I'm I'm really glad you've presented now but I want to do is now optimise your treatment and make sure that we just get rid of all the infection for you.

Patient: Ok.

Doctor: Is you don't want to be left with nasty scarring on your face do you?

Patient: No no no.

Doctor: So is it I think...

Patient: Yeah that's what's gotta be done.

Doctor: What can be done what can be done about work?

Patient: Um phoar I don't know I'll have to phone then um I'm covering for other people you see.

Doctor: Yeah.

Patient: The time.

Doctor: Yeah maybe a few phone calls...

Patient: Mmh yeah yeah.

Doctor: ...and you'll ok.

Patient: Yeah.

Doctor: Um are you alright if I show Jo...

Patient: Yeah

Doctor: ...the wound and just...

Patient: Yeah sure yeah.

Doctor: ...just explain to her medically what's going on?

Patient: Of course.

Doctor: Ok. So Jo what what can you see just describe the wound to me?

Jo: Um well first of all it looks very red um and inflamed ah and it's quite a lot of puss that looks like it's breaking through through the wounds.

Doctor: Yeah.

Jo: Um and the stitches look very tight as well so I'd be a bit concerned about that as well.

Doctor: Yeah yeah definitely. That's one of my main worries that the stitches look very tight and I think that some puss already breaking through, that's probably evidence of more underneath that's trying to come out. What about the redness around the wound here what do you think?

Jo: It looks like there could be the beginning of um cellulitis possibly?

Doctor: Yeah I think so, so cellulitis which is some infection into the soft tissues I think absolutely right which is why I want her on some intravenous antibiotics.

Jo: Yeah.

Doctor: Yeah ok so you'll be with me later in theatre what what other structures will I be looking out for when we open up the wound?

Jo: Um well obviously the parotid gland...

Doctor: Yeah.

Jo: ...is is just just under where the wound is.

Doctor: Yes it's just there isn't it yep?

Jo: Yep and the facial nerve.

Doctor: That's right so the facial nerve is very closely associated isn't it.

Jo: Mmh.

Doctor: Well done ok yeah. Alright so that was a little anatomy lesson there for Jo um have you had much to eat or drink today?

Patient: Ah no just lunch earlier.

Doctor: Just lunch so probably a couple of hours ago. If you could stay not eating and drinking for me...

Patient: Uh ha.

Doctor: ... um I'll ask the anaesthetist to come down and meet you and we'll actually probably try and get you up to theatre by late afternoon today.

Patient: Oh ok.

Doctor: Ok?

Patient: Ok yeah.

Doctor: So if you've got any people to let know or...

Patient: Yeah yeah I I can call them.

Doctor: Do you want us to phone anyone for you?

Patient: Ah no it's alright I've got my phone thanks.

Doctor: Ok, well Steve if you could stay um with Miss Turlington. Steve will be here with you and if you've got anything he can sort out for you then.

Patient: Ok thanks.

Doctor: Make him useful.

Patient: Mmh.

Doctor: Ok alright so I'll be seeing you later.

Patient: Ok yep thank you.

Doctor: Thank you. Alright Jo shall we got back up to theatres?

Patient: Thanks.