Hank Green Speaks Candidly in “Pissing Out Cancer” Comedy Special [VIDEOS]

YouTube educator Hank Green reflects on his Hodgkin lymphoma diagnosis in a new comedy special.

July 3, 2024 By Laura Schmidt

YouTube star and educator Hank Green was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma last year. Now, according to Variety, he’s sharing his experience in the comedy special Pissing Out Cancer.

Last year, New York Times bestselling writer and science educator Hank Green announced that he had been diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma, a treatable form of blood cancer that affects the lymph system.

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A post shared by Dropout Presents (@dropoutpresents)

In the special, streaming on Dropout, Green, who is now in remission, discusses what it was like being diagnosed with cancer at 43 years old and “reflects on the good, the bad and the weird parts of having cancer.”

Green shares more details about the show in his YouTube post “Crying About My Cancer Special”:

The title riffs off the fact that tumor cells broken down by chemotherapy exit the body through urine, Green told STAT News.

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A post shared by Hank Green (@hankgreen)

Shortly before his cancer diagnosis, Green said, he noticed that his lymph nodes were enlarged and there was swelling in his armpit. A subsequent biopsy confirmed he had Hodgkin lymphoma.

This type of cancer generally responds well to treatment and can often be cured. In fact, the American Cancer Society estimates that 8,830 new cases of Hodgkin lymphoma were diagnosed in the United States in 2023, with a five-year relative survival rate of 89% for all diagnosed patients.



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A post shared by Hank Green (@hankgreen)

Green, who teaches history, science, math and more via easy-to-digest YouTube videos, was afraid to share his diagnosis at first but has since used his experience to continue to educate.

Another way he inspires is through a titled DaysSinceHankGreenLastStartedaNewThing.com, the site is really just a landing page that tracks how many days it has been since Green started a new thing (the site also details what that new project was). His most recent project: throwing the first pitch before the Los Angeles Angels game against the Detroit Tigers.

Green closes his special on a positive note and with a nod to a well-loved celebrity.

“So the special ends, ‘I’ve been thinking a lot about the Baltimore Orioles, and either they’re going to get me or I’m going to get them.’ And that was the end of the show,” Green told Variety. “But I added a line which is, ‘Either way, what comes next is going to be beautiful,’ which is based on a Keanu Reeves quote.”

The quote originates from an interview Reeves did on “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” in 2019.

“When he was asked, ‘What do you think happens after we die?,’ he said, ‘I know that the ones who love us will miss us,’” Green said. “So to turn away from, ‘What is my experience of sickness and death?’ to ‘What is the human experience?’ And I’m just one piece of human experience, and the things that come after me will also be beautiful.”

He continued: “So in the last line of my show, I wanted to say, this whole show has been about me, but actually, the whole show is about humans and the experience of being human: a weird jumble of cells that’s experiencing the universe. That line is the line that I wrote and added to the end of the show, and it changed it a lot for me.”

To read more, click #Hodgkin Lymphoma. There, you’ll find headlines such as “New Cancer Resource to Help Families Understand Pediatric Hodgkin Lymphoma,” “What Does a Cancer Doula Do?” and “NIH Scientists Find Weak Points on Epstein-Barr Virus.”

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