1. You have to take so many pills that your stomach feels filled up with pills and you don’t feel like eating your dinner.

2. The pills make you feel tired.

3. The pills give you a headache.

4. Some of the pills make you feel like you have to throw up, so you carry a vomit bucket all around with you.

5. You get oral thrush in your mouth and down your throat and the pain is so bad that every time you swallow it feels like you swallowed a rusty Brillo.

6. Oral thrush makes your tongue look gross.

7. Your taste buds don’t work right, so your food tastes weird.

8. You get shingles. They are blisters that go around your body in a circle. They make your back hurt so much that you have to be hunched over, and when you get covered with a sheet, it feels like someone is stabbing you.

9. You get pneumonia lots of times and you can’t breathe.

10. You get scared because you can’t breathe and you feel like you are suffocating.

11. You get lots of high fevers.
12. You get chills.

13. Your hair falls out.

14. Your eyes get infected and swollen shut and yucky white stuff oozes out and then your eyes get glued shut.

15. The rashes itch like crazy.

16. You get an ugly fungus under your fingernails.

17. The fungus itches and hurts because it pushes your nails, so you bite your nails to make them feel better.

18. You get ugly rashes on your arms.

19. Your medicines make your teeth turn black.

20. You get gingivitis and your teeth get loose.

21. You don’t grow.

22. You get diarrhea most of the time.

23. Your brain shrinks and you sometimes forget what you are talking about, and suddenly you forget how to write cursive.

24. Sometimes people get paralyzed, like my brother Mike.
25. When you get paralyzed, your face is stuck one way and you can’t make a good smile.

26. When you get paralyzed, you choke on your food.

27. You lose your balance.

28. Your bone marrow stops working and you have to get Neupogen injections every other day.

29. You get the injections in your stomach on some days.

30. The Neupogen injections give you bad pains in your bones.

31. The pain in your bones make you feel like an old person.

32. You get infections in your bloodstream and have to get IV antibiotics every day.

33. You have to get heparin locks put in your veins so that you can get the IV antibiotics.

34. Some of the IV antibiotics burn your veins and you get really bad pain in your arms and they swell up.

35. Some of the IV antibiotics give you bad rashes all over your body and when you go outside, all of the fruit flies follow you around so your can’t even enjoy a picnic.

36. You get herpes infection in your bloodstream and it makes sores in your mouth and throat and esophagus and the pain is horrible
37. You have to gargle with some stuff that numbs your herpes sores and it also numbs your throat, so your saliva goes down the wrong tube and you choke.

38. You get a bird infection called MAI.

39. MAI infects all the organs in your body and you have pain every day in lots of places.

40. MAI makes your intestines swell shut so you can’t eat. Then you have to get a broviac, which is a tube that goes in your chest and into your heart.

41. MAI infects your heart muscle. The heart muscle gets stiff and you feel very tired and breathless.

42. You get heart failure and your face and stomach swell up.

43. You get tumors in your liver.

44. You can’t have surgery or chemotherapy for the tumors because you are already too sick with AIDS and the chemotherapy will make your immune system weaker.

45. You can’t get radiation on your tumors because radiation makes your immune system weaker.

46. Your liver gets so big that you look like you swallowed a watermelon.
47. If your liver gets too big, you can’t lie down to sleep at night or your heart and lungs get crushed.

48. If your liver gets too big, you can’t sit up during the day or your heart and lungs get pushed up too far.

49. If your liver gets too big, then you have to sit half lying down and half sitting up. Then it’s hard to paint your model airplanes because the paint drips on your stomach.

50. When your heart is failing and you liver is gigantic, it is hard to breathe because your lungs are filled with liquid and they are getting crushed all the same time, so you feel like a hippopotamus is sitting on you.

51. You have to go to the hospital outpatient department and get packed red blood cells because you are too anemic and your heart beats about two hundred times a minute.

52. With a watermelon belly, skinny arms and legs, black teeth, and hair that’s falling out, and being pushed around in a special reclining wheelchair, people stare at you in the mall, so you have to stick your tongue out at them when your parents aren’t looking.

53. You miss your old bed that your dad made for you when you were little, because now you have to sleep in a hospital bed so that you can sit partway up to breathe.

54. You feel embarrassed when you wet your bed, even though your mom says its OK, not to worry because she feels like putting some cheerful, clean sheets on the bed anyway, and you know that’s not true because a mother would be crazy to want to change sheets in the middle of the night.
55. You have to make a will and decide who to leave all of your treasures to, especially your favorite teddy bear that your mom and dad bought you when you were four years old.

56. You worry about whether your dog will be OK when you die.

57. You think about what it would be like to grow up, but you know you won’t.

58. You worry that when you die and got to heaven, you will miss your mom and dad and brothers. You worry even more that they will miss you and be sad.

59. You wonder if anybody will be named Charles John DePrince III and if he will be called Cubby. You hope so.

60. You wonder if it is painful when you die.

61. You make your mom promise to give you enough morphine when you are dying so that you don’t feel any pain.

62. You do a lot of important things because you have to squeeze them into a short time like ten or eleven years instead of eighty-seven.

63. You try to be extra good and cheerful because it you are extra good and cheerful when you go to heaven, you’ll get to be a guardian angel. Being a guardian angel is a better job than just being a spirit.

64. You wonder if people will still remember you after you are dead.