

NFL's James Conner Was Told "You Got About a Week" After Cancer Diagnosis [VIDEO]

The running back was in rehab for a torn ligament when the cancer was discovered.

July 26, 2019 By [Alicia Green](#)

In 2015, when Pittsburgh Steelers running back James Conner was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma, doctors gave him only a week to live, according to [Bleacher Report](#).

"The doctor told me I had about a week left," Conner told *Ya Neva Know*: ya know what I mean podcast host Mike Seander during a guest appearance. "He said, 'You got about a week. If you didn't get this treated, you had about a week at the rate it was growing.'"

At the time, Connor was attending and playing football at the University of Pittsburgh. But a torn MCL (medial collateral ligament) landed him in rehab. Doctors discovered his cancer after he reported having difficulty sleeping and additional testing was done.

"I'm rehabbing for that, trying to make a comeback before the season ends," he recalled on the podcast. "And then I'm rehabbing and [I get] night sweats, bro. I'm getting like 15 minutes of sleep a night, going through it."

Connor learned that he had tumors growing around his heart. He began chemotherapy. But the hardest part of his diagnosis was telling his family, particularly his brothers.

"I remember that like it was yesterday," he said. "How would they feel if their youngest brother was not here no more? How would they feel if their youngest brother died? I said, 'I can't do it. I can't go.'"

In May 2016, Connor was declared cancer-free and returned to Pitt for his senior season before being drafted by the Steelers in 2017.

Connor was named starting running back for the team last season. He was selected to the 2019 NFL Pro Bowl and named started running back for the AFC Pro Bowl Team. He ended the 2018 season rushing for 973 yards and scoring 12 touchdowns and had 55 receptions for another 497 yards and one score.

His cancer story touched so many people that he even appeared on [Ellen](#) and [ABC News World News Tonight](#). In 2017, NFL 360 told Connor's story of triumph, which can be viewed above.

For similar coverage, read "[Tom Brady's Mom Attends Super Bowl Cancer-Free \[VIDEO\]](#)" and "[Erin Andrews Talks About Not Disclosing Cancer Diagnosis to Coworkers.](#)"

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