

Burch On His Feet and Back to Work

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Erik Wander/KMXT

A long time

Kodiak fisherman is back in town after weeks in an Anchorage hospital and is recovering well from a benign brain tumor.

Originally from Montana,

72-year-old Al Burch is a commercial fisherman and executive director of the Alaska Whitefish Trawlers' Association. At the end of August this year, after suffering two attacks, doctors discovered that Burch had a brain tumor.

-- (Burch 1 39 sec "Luckily it wasn't ... took me up to the hospital.")

After the second attack, an MRI revealed the tumor. Burch was in Anchorage for surgery just two days later. It took surgeons about six hours to remove what turned out to be a benign tumor. Burch said the tumor had probably been growing for many years.

-- (Burch 2 30 sec "The tumor's gone ... lower back.")

Burch is currently undergoing physical therapy, because the surgery weakened his nerves and affected his motor skills, but he is already back at work for a few hours a day when he doesn't have therapy. He is also planning to attend Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute meetings in Seattle at the end of the month. He said he never stopped working, even when he was in the hospital.

-- (Burch 3 15 sec "I was trying to keep track ... gave them my proxies.")

Burch is moving about freely these days with the help of a walker and says he and his doctors are pleased by the speedy pace of his recovery so far.

-- (Burch 4 40 sec "They said probably ... bothers me a little bit.")

Burch said he is grateful for all the e-mails, cards and flowers he received from friends and members of the community while he was in the hospital and for their continuing love and support. He plans to travel to Anchorage for further tests in December. I'm Erik Wander.