

Gordon Burchill:

My Awakening:

May, 2005:

Studio II TV story of three men experienced with Prostate Cancer.

The men are candid.

They are in their late 50's and recovering from radical surgery.

Initially they are dealing with incontinence and erectile dysfunction.

They have positive expectations. Their problems are dissolving and they look forward to becoming normally functioning men again.

Their recommendations to all men:

- Always include PSA test with annual physicals.
- PSA tests surprise with cancer positive results.
- Digital tests don't work as well.

My Panic:

Its three years since my last physical:

My GP always talks me out of PSA tests:

- Tests are often misleading.
- Cost \$20.00 (OHIP doesn't pay)
- He can tell with normal rectal tests if I'm OK.

My action:

September 23, 2005:

Annual physical with my GP:

I demand PSA test

- GP says, "OK but it's going to cost you \$20.00".
- I say, "Hang the cost I want it".
- PSA comes back as 4.7.
- Probability of cancer with PSA greater than 2.0.

October 19, 2005:

Review with my GP:

- He suggests a follow on test for \$40.00.
- PSA comes back as 5.6 with F/T ratio of 0.16.
- GP refers me to an Urologist.

February 16, 2006:

Review with Urologist:

- He's not very concerned with PSA tests.
- Performs regular digital test (seems normal).
- Takes PSA test anyway.

February 17, 2006:

Urologist phones:

- My PSA is 5.6 (tests not improving - five months).
- He schedules me for a biopsy.

March 8, 2006:

- Biopsy takes place.

March 16, 2006:

- Pathology report:
- Two out of eight biopsies are positive:
- Gleason score of 7(4.3) – aggressive.
- Gleason score of 7(3.4) – less aggressive.
- Schedules Ultrasound.

March 28, 2006:

- Ultrasound report:
- All my glands are unremarkable.
- Enlarged prostate but no sign of metastasis.

March 29, 2006:

Man To Man Awareness Meeting:

- Recommended by a member with twelve cancer free years.
- Dr Morton describes radiation history from late 1880's to current time.
- Includes discussion of Brachytherapy.
- I like the guy

March 30, 2006:

Urologist:

- Recommends against radical surgery (I'm too old).
- Recommends radiation @ Sunnybrook.

April 27, 2006:

Sunnybrook:

- Read biopsy and ultrasound records.
- Perform digital test
- Recommend HDR Brachytherapy.
- Meet Dr. Morton.
- I agree to HDR Brachytherapy:
- I like the idea of direct radiation of cancers.
- I like the idea of procedure over surgery.

May 8, 2006:

Sunnybrook

- HDR preparation.
- Use CT-Scan & radiation device (without radiation).
- They line up my body for radiation treatments.
- My body is tattooed to precisely line up my body for remaining radiation scans.

May 16, 2006:

Sunnybrook

- HDR Brachytherapy procedure:
- Spinal anesthetic numbs body from waist down.
- 18 tubes inserted into prostate through skin between scrotum and anus.
- Ultrasound provides visibility for alignment.
- CT-Scan confirms precise placement of tubes.
- Tubes are connected to computer.
- It briefly threads a wire with iridium head through each tube to burn the cancers.
- I wait in recovery room for anesthetic to wear off.
- Nurse helps me get up and walk.
- I go home (not allowed to drive myself).
- Amazingly free of pain:
- My bottom is tender but not sore.
- Totally unlike former hernia operation.
- Within three days I ride a bike.

May 29, 2006:

Sunnybrook

- Begin External radiation.
- Five days per week for three weeks.

May 31, 2006:

Man to Man Awareness Meeting.

- I don't attend. I choose rest instead

June 19, 2006:

Sunnybrook

- Last External radiation treatment.
- PSA results of 4.6 - down from 5.6
- Next review scheduled for August 9, 2006.

I am involved in a Five Year Clinical trial:

Reviews occur in intervals:

- 1, 3, 6, 12, 18 & 24 months.
- PSA test taken every interval.
- Biopsy taken at 24 month interval.
  
- Annual only reviews continue to include year 5.
- Reviews include making out forms about my feelings:
- IPSS score – urination.
- IIEF score – sexual abilities.
- EPIC score – quality of life.
- PSA score.

Side effects:

- My bowels are touchy.
- In second week of External radiation I change diet to exclude fiber.
- Urination requirements are sudden (get out of my way).
- Nightly bathroom visit every two hours.
- No need for pads.
- Just get out of my way.

▪ Four weeks later:

- Back to regular diet:
- My bowels slightly touchy but not a problem.
- Nightly bathroom visit once per night.
- Urination requirements are not as urgent.
- I may not stop to talk.

Expectations:

- By August 9th.
- I expect everything will be back to normal.

*This Is A Piece Of Cake!*