

Stan Sandler:

I was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in June, 2001 at the age of 75. My PSA was checked every year as part of my annual medical. Although my PSA readings were no higher than 4 they were moving around abnormally according to my GP. The digital examination was normal. However my three brothers all had prostate cancer so my GP ordered a free PSA test. The reading was one that indicates cancer may be present.

With my family background my GP, who is very conservative, arranged an examination with Dr. Trachtenberg at PMH. This took place in early June and once again the digital examination was normal. Dr. Trachtenberg requested a biopsy. My wife and myself met with Dr. Trachtenberg one week after the biopsy and he told us that the biopsy had shown cancer in the prostate with a Gleason of 6 and a T1A staging. It should be noted that I did not find the biopsy painful at all. The doctor discussed the options including surgery and radiation.

I immediately booked surgery based on the fact that I wanted the cancer removed from my body and the surgery allowed for radiation if the cancer reoccurred whereas radiation could not be followed by surgery.

However, Dr. Trachtenberg recommended a consultation with a radiologist. After this consultation with Dr. Trachtenberg, Jennifer Harris, the doctors' clinical nurse spent almost one hour talking with my wife and myself and this calmed us considerably.

My wife and myself met with the radiologist and he explained the pros and cons of radiation. He recommended watchful waiting and that I schedule a follow up PSA test in one year. He suggested that at my age this was the appropriate action. Both my wife and myself had an initial favourable reaction but after reflection we decided to once again discuss my condition with Dr. Trachtenberg. We were fortunate to see him that same morning and, after consulting his notes on my case he strongly urged me to do something. He told me that to do nothing could lead to the spread of the cancer within 4-5 years. I asked him if he was comfortable performing the surgery on me and when he answered positively I confirmed that the surgery was a go.

I subsequently had a CT, which indicated that the cancer was contained in the prostate gland. My GP had discovered a heart murmur and sent me to a cardiologist. After a very thorough examination, the cardiologist told me that there was no reason why I should not proceed with the surgery in spite of my age of 75. My GP also told me, that in his opinion, the radiologist was treating my age not my symptoms.

The conventional wisdom with many urologists was and still is that if you are over 70 surgery should not be the chosen treatment for prostate cancer regardless of your physical condition.

The surgery was performed on a Wednesday afternoon and took less than 2 hours. As is normal with any prostate removal an analysis was done on the surrounding tissue and this showed no cancer. I went home on the following Sunday and had

the catheter removed without incidence on the Tuesday after my release from the hospital, 9 days.

My recovery was without incident. The incontinence I experienced gradually diminished and cleared up completely after 3 months. I had my first post op check up with Dr. Trachtenberg in October and my PSA was insignificant. I started playing golf again after seeing Dr. Trachtenberg and have led a very normal life since then. My last PSA was taken last December and still is non-detectable.

I want to conclude this presentation with the thought that your age should not immediately rule out surgical removal of your prostate. Of course your physical and medical history has to be taken into consideration but please remember that any treatment you decide upon should be for your condition and not because of your age.

Thank you.