

303. Six Years Free From Side Effects

303.six years free.doc, 5 pages

Synopsis: Diagnosed in 2004 at age 68 with Gleason 3+3, I "shopped" the USA for diagnostic tests and consults while employing active surveillance. By "active" I mean a strict, boring diet plus supplements. I've "enjoyed" no side effects for six years. Now it is time for treatment.

11/98 to 8/03: PSA from 2.9 to 3.9

9/04: PSA 5.5 and my internist referred me to an urologist

10/04: 12 core biopsy. 3 cores high PIN

1/05: 12 core biopsy. 1 core 14% cancer. Gleason 3+3. Gland 44 cc. My wife and I met with my urologist who reviewed alternative treatments, but he obviously thought brachytherapy was the way to go. That was his specialty.

3/05 2nd opinion – Bostwick Labs, Richmond, VA. I learned about Bostwick Laboratories from members of the Prostate Cancer Information Group. My understanding is that it is one of the premier labs in the country. Confirms 1st biopsy results. 2nd biopsy: 1 core 5%, 1 core 10% and 1 core 5%. Gleason 3+3

5/05: 3rd opinion – Johns Hopkins. Confirmed previous pathology reports.

6/05: Planned to go to Seattle (Dr. Peter Grimm) to have seeds implanted because I wanted to have the very best treatment possible. Dr. Grimm is one of the leading urologists in the country that specializes in seed implants and has done thousands. After learning about potential side effects from implants, I wanted to go to the best. If problems developed, at least I didn't choose the less costly alternative in Cincinnati. My local urologist indicated he would not treat me as a regular patient if seeds were done in Seattle.

7/05: My internist recommended another urologist who is a surgeon. My new urologist suggested I consider Watchful Waiting because of the small amount of cancer which appeared to be non-aggressive. I decided to go that route and cancelled my Seattle appointment.

8/05: PSA 4.2. Started taking many supplements: I learned a lot from our group and identified some of them from The Prostate Cancer Treatment Book. The internet was a big help too. I take Selenium, Lycopene, fish oil capsules, CoQ10, Sal Palmetto, flaxseed meal, crushed walnuts, tomato juice and two or three cups of green tea per day.

And changed diet: Which is really boring.

Breakfast - Monday through Friday - Quaker Oats with flaxseed meal and raisins, crushed walnuts and skim milk. Green tea.

Lunch - Seven days a week. Tuna salad or chicken salad on crackers, one half an apple, two pretzels, tomato juice and green tea. Once in a while I treat myself to some lunch meat on crackers.

Supper - We normally have some type of meat and sometimes fish. She normally includes a green vegetable, green tea, and a bowl of fruit (grapes, strawberries in season, blueberries and peaches).

8/05 to 5/09: PSA fluctuated up and down up to maximum of 5.2.

10/09: PSA 7.1.

12/09: PSA 5.2

6/10: PSA 6.3. Urologist felt small nodule on prostate.

9/10: 20 core biopsy. Cancerous tumor involves 30% of submitted tissue on left side and 20% on right side. Gleason is 4+3 for both: I honestly could hardly believe the 4+3 Gleason score. To go from T1c (2 cores out of 24 with less than 10% cancer in each) to T2a with an average of 25% cancerous) in six years was mind numbing. However, my reaction was "what is, is", and I need to go forward. I was just one of the unlucky ones for whom "watchful waiting" is ending before my death. Gland 83 cc: I was totally shocked that it had grown so much in almost six years, and there is no evidence as to why

this happened. I do not have any concerns about "pin cushion" effects from three biopsies. My first biopsy contained three high PINs, and the second was warranted because of that. The third biopsy was necessary because of the nodule discovered.

10/10: 2nd opinion at Bostwick Labs. Similar results except Gleason is 3+4 on left side. Consulted with with a respected Cincinnati radiation oncologist (Dr. RO).

11/10: Consulted. Dr. RO recommends hormonal therapy and EBRT.

12/10: PSA 5.3. Consulted with Dr. Gregory Merrick in Wheeling WV. He is a top radiation oncologist and recommended by Dr. Grimm. Dr. Merrick has published the results of more than sixteen hundred of his patients who were treated with hormonal therapy, four weeks of EBRT and seeds implanted. His recommendation in my case was hormonal therapy and EBRT using the Calypso System. He was concerned that seed implants would result in significant urinary and bowel side effects.

12/10: I talked to Dr. RO by phone, and he answered all my questions. I will begin hormonal therapy in Cincinnati on 1/11 and have EBRT at the West Chester facility which uses the TomoTherapy system. I believe this system and the Calypso system will give me similar cure and side effects results.

12/10: I have no regrets for not having treatment in 2005 since I have been without any side effects for almost six years. I was born in February, 1936.