

Randall's Story

I am Randall. I worked for the US Treasury where they gave us a free physical exam and blood test every two years to check if the conditions in the environment of the currency printing process was killing you. At age 40 they asked me if I wanted a PSA test. I didn't even know what it was and said yes. The standard for the test at the time was 4 and my result was 5.6. So I saw a urologist and did the PSA test every other month, (which I did two other times in my lifetime) and the results were steady. I never once 'passed' the PSA test at whatever the standard was at the time. At the time they were looking for fluctuations in the results. So I began the process of 'watching and waiting' and my results were steady at 5.0 to 5.6 until I was age 63.

I began to have a slow-down of urination and took another PSA test and the result was 10. In the mean-time there was a huge media report on the national news about the "over-treatment" of prostate cancer and I had no other adverse symptoms so I started taking Tamsulosin and six months later my PSA test was 20. So I took another test as soon as that result came back and the result was 30? So with that, despite having reservations about how accurate the test actually was I took a prostate biopsy. I was informed I had low-grade prostate cancer (I think) and offered a choice of treatments at Ironwood Cancer Research Center. I opted for robotic gland removal surgery over radiation therapy because I was told that one could have radiation therapy after gland removal surgery if it wasn't successful, but if you took radiation therapy first it was not possible to have gland removal surgery after the gland had been radiated. So I had the impression and expectation and promise that cutting that cancer out of there would cure me but the true fact is that all the years of watching and waiting caused me to wait too long to go in for treatment sooner I suppose.

They took out the seminal vesicles as well and when they had the gland out to cut-up and biopsy the news was that the surgery was not a total success, the cancer had probably escaped the gland into the 'prostate bed area' (positive margins) an possibly the bladder neck, and I would need further treatment in the form of 'salvage radiation'. The surgery was a success in that the surgeon made a good sewing-up connection of my urethra, minus the gland so I had good urination capabilities and I had a minimum of other surgery side-effects. But I had some mentally deficient and irrational theory that the surgery might have been better and more complete and successful if his wife, the wife of the surgeon, was not the radiation oncologist waiting to do further treatment on me. So I was disappointed and upset that the surgery had not cured me and the PSA was 7.9 after the surgery.

So I took up with Cancer Treatment Center of America, perhaps for the wrong reason that I saw some very inviting television commercials they were running at the time. I got a 'pet-scan' and started taking Lupron (the dreaded eliminator of testosterone) for 16 months and started Radiation therapy the first week of November 2019. (The PSA was 0.1 when I started)

I chose CTCA North Phoenix for several reasons, one was that the Varian True-beam radiation machine there was the newest going in Phoenix, and Anderson Bauer was given by Phoenix Magazine the Top Doctor Award for radiation oncologists. Then after four treatments an AZ-101 road-work crew dug up a fiber optic cable and the machine went down Friday. I hope the break does not have any effect on the outcome of the treatment. I am optimistic and hopeful! Unlike many other forms of cancer, Prostate cancer is considered somewhat of a manageable chronic disease. So wish me luck!

I am not an expert but you may give out my e-mail if anyone wants to contact me.

*Good news! The cancer doctor gave me five years to live.
I told him I didn't think I could pay the bill in that much time.
So he gave me another five years. :)*

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