Eleven Years

It was eleven years ago that I received my prostate cancer diagnosis. I'm glad that I'm still here to write about it.

November 21, 2021 By Dan Zeller

On Tuesday, I had my appointment with the urologist to review my latest PSA results. In all honesty, it was probably a waste of both of our time and should have been postponed until after the PSMA PET scan.

Because today is Veterans Day, a federal holiday, they didn't book any appointments in the clinic for today, so that meant that they overbooked appointments on Tuesday. That meant that the doctor was really pressed for time, and I was okay with keeping the meeting short.

The whole conversation went like this:

Dr.: Hi. What's the status of the PSMA PET scan?

Me: It's scheduled on 30 November.

Dr.: How are we going to get the results?

Me: I don't know. I have to figure that out with UCLA. Not to sound rude, but given how new this is, are you going to know what to do with the results?

Dr. Oh, yeah. Not a problem. You can just hand-carry the results if you want. Everything else okay?

Me: Yep. Fine. So if the PSMA scan shows the cancer is still in the prostate bed, and given my PSA doubling time is 45 months, what do you see as the next step?

Dr.: Radiation. (Said without a hint of hesitancy.)

Me: Uh, okay.

And that was basically the conversation, with a few other minor details and questions not worthy of putting in writing. I don't think she picked up on my reluctance to get zapped or, if she did, it was something that she, as the physician, wanted to overrule.

We agreed to schedule a follow-up in January with another PSA test in advance of the meeting and, hopefully, with the PSMA PET scan results in hand for all. For some reason, they get slammed

just before and after the holidays, and the first available appointment was 8 February. I'm generally okay with that, but if the scan and the early January PSA tests reveal something compelling, I'll try to reschedule sometime earlier.

So that's about how I expected the appointment to go (even without the rushing).

Oh. I almost forgot. I'm now retired from work! Woo-hoo!

Yes, I took the leap, perhaps a little sooner than I expected, but that's okay. I added everything up and it was just time.

I'll be 64 years old in January, and there isn't a whole lot of longevity in our family. Dad died at 69; his mom died at 69; and mom died at 73. I can't say that the past is prologue, but you get the picture. As cliché as it is, tomorrow isn't promised and, after 40+ years in the workforce, I wanted to reserve my tomorrows for me. Selfish, I know. ????

Given where I'm at in my cancer journey, I also wanted to use as many good tomorrows as I can before radiation, hormone therapy, or the disease itself turns them into bad tomorrows.

Finally, frustration at work exceeded fun and rewards, so that was another good indicator that it was time to start the next chapter of my life.

My last day was 29 October, so I'm still adapting, trying to find a new routine. (It's challenging going from 100 m.p.h. to zero!) I'm sure I'll figure it out. I have another trip in the near future, and I'm excited about that.

So that's it for this post.

Be well!

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