A Life of Crackers and Coke

For 29 years I have eaten so healthily — home-grown veg, the right balance of protein, carbs and greens. And look where it got me!

August 15, 2017 By Amanda Hayes

Well what a week it has been… It seems a bit unreal that everything has happened in the last eight days. It has been one of the longest and saddest weeks of my life.

Exactly eight days ago I felt healthy. I thought I was in recovery, I was slowly getting my life back and adjusting to my new way of life. I was back seeing friends, working a few hours, easing myself back into the working world.

Things couldn't be further from that now even if I tried. The few hours of work I was doing I've had to give up. It's too risky being around people when I'm having chemotherapy. I'm more susceptible to infections and no offence… But people are the worst when it comes to making sure they don't miss their appointments "oh, I'm sorry! I was on my deathbed but I just had to come in for my nail appointment" or "I feel absolutely awful but I made it… Please give me a medal and let me infect you with my gammy germs" I joke… But you don't realise how gross people can be… Until you work with them. Don't get me wrong, I love my job but it's just way too risky for me. I love it but not at the risk of my health… Even more!

So I had chemotherapy last Wednesday. Yep… Very long and boring day. I'll be getting 2 types of chemo, paclitaxel and carboplatin. They're both chemos I've had before. Back in February just after I was first diagnosed they put me on an emergency chemo program to get treatment started. Treatment didn't go well… My first session I went into an anaphylactic shock. It was awful. Basically my body shut down because of the drugs. It's pretty common apparently when administering paclitaxel, it's a 50-50 on if your body will accept the drug or reject it. After a massive dose of adrenaline they counteracted the reaction and I was back to normal. They decided, for that day, not to give me paclitaxel and just gave me carboplatin. The following week I had both again just this time the paclitaxel was administered slowly so my body could adjust to it. Hence why chemo is an all day event.

So Wednesday I was up bright and early to be ready to start treatment at 9am. I'm having chemo every 21 days this time round. At the start of the year it was an emergency program to get things started and chemo was weekly with the drugs being weaker. I was actually one of the lucky few before when chemo actually made me feel better. I would have a couple of days after where I could go out and see people.

I don’t think I’ll be so lucky this time round.

Chemo made me pretty tired afterwards. Even though I slept a majority of the day I was up there for over 8 hours. I can’t keep my attention to anything so reading, watching TV, colouring in books or whatever doesn’t help. All I seem to do is sleep.

The days after made me extremely nauseous. I have anti sickness pills that stop me from actually being sick but the queasiness is always there. When you’re queasy you just don’t want to eat… Which is the worst when you’ve got the biggest battle of your life on your hands ahead. Anything I do manage to eat goes straight through me… Sorry for being so graphic but this is the reality of it. So with the weekend of feeling grotty, not eating much and not keeping much in its obvious that I’m gonna drop weight.

So this week I’m trying my hardest to eat more meals a day and snack hard. But it’s not easy… My tastes have already changed. Things I liked before I can’t touch. Flavours aren’t the same and it’s difficult to figure out what I actually fancy.

People have been really sweet before and given me advice of diets I should try to help bring my body back into balance which has been incredibly thoughtful and I’ve been so grateful but I kid you not… If anyone suggested things this week I probably would have snapped. I feel awful for saying that because I know they’re only trying to help but honestly if there was a way, I’m pretty sure I would have tried it. And to be quite frank, I couldn’t give a fuck anymore! I know! I’m sorry!! But for 29 years I have eaten so healthily. Probably better than you! Home-grown veg, the right balance of protein, carbs and greens. I’ve been good! And look where it fucking got me! So screw it. I’m eating what I damn well please.

You’re probably thinking I’m sat here eating gateaux and sundaes with ridiculous amounts of saturated fats, refined sugars and numerous E numbers… I wish. Nope, just good old Jacobs crackers and a can of coke. My good old go-to buddies that seem to be my safety net foods.

I expect, as I go further into the program it’ll get worse. But let’s look on the positive side for once. That’s one treatment down. Just another 5 to go…

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