Month 143 – Much Improved

Nearly two months after salvage radiation therapy for my prostate cancer, I am able to get out and enjoy the world again.

October 20, 2022 By Dan Zeller

I don't know where the time has gone. It's hard to believe that we're approaching two months since ending the salvage radiation therapy.

On the whole, things have improved significantly for me since then. My energy level has returned to pre-zapping levels, except when I'm stupid and stay up way too late at night (that's something I can control). That's been a good thing because I've been able to get out and enjoy the world again.

As far as the urinary control issues are concerned, they're much improved, too. I opted to stop the Tamsulosin (Flomax) near the end of September, and that seems to have helped. My frequency is greatly improved. During the day, I can go several hours between runs to the toilet, and at night, I'm only have to empty my bladder one to three times a night. That's a godsend.

The urgency still can be a bit of an issue. There are times where I don't have much time to get to the toilet if I let things go a little too long. On a related note, since stopping the Tamsulosin, my leakage / incontinence has improved as well, even with the urgency. That's a positive, too.

I had a video appointment with my primary care physician about the pain I've been experiencing in my back. In short, even though things seems to be slowly improving (even after the call with him on 26 September), he still wants me to have an MRI to see what may be going on. That's scheduled for this Friday.

I'm not exactly sure how the hormone therapy works as you approach the end of the six month dosage period, but I'm guessing its effects may linger another few months beyond the end of the dosage. Again, I've been blessed in that my only real side effect has been the mild fatigue—no weight gain and no hot flashes. (Even though all three of my doctors say my back pain is unrelated to the hormone therapy, I'm still not convinced. There's a first for everything, right???)

The radiation oncologist's office wouldn't schedule my three-month follow-up appointment until the end of October when they had a better handle on the doctor's November schedule. I'll get my PSA checked again in November in advance of that appointment, and I have a follow-up with the urologist on 13 December.

It’s good to be back into a more normal state after all of that. Let’s hope that there are no long-term radiation side effects that start popping up two to five years down the road.

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