Prescription for Nerve Pain

One of the reasons that I'm so reluctant to get on prescription medications stems from what my mother went through near the end of her life.

May 13, 2020 By Dan Zeller

I've never been a fan of running to the doctor to ask for magic prescription pills that will cure whatever ails me, so when I go to the doctor and they ask this 62-year old patient what prescription medications I'm taking, they look at me in disbelief when I say, "None." "C'mon. You've got to be taking something!" "Nope." "Really?!?"

That doesn't mean that I won't take prescription medications when they're truly needed. Once prescribed, I'm pretty religious about following the instructions closely.

Well, the prescription that's supposed to alleviate the nerve pain in my leg from the bulging disc finally arrived today. I opened the package (washed and sanitized my hands) and pulled out the instructions/guidelines—all 88 inches/223 cm of them:

And now you know why I'm not keen on taking prescription meds!

The primary purpose of the drug is as an antidepressant, but it has shown that it has an impact on nerve pain as well. (I prefer not to name the specific medication here.)

The drug can, "improve your mood, sleep, appetite, and energy level and decrease pain due to certain medical conditions." But then you get to the side effects section and learn that "nausea, dry mouth, constipation, loss of appetite [huh??], tiredness [again, huh??], drowsiness, or increased sweating may occur." Oh, yeah. Throw in "dizziness or lightheadedness or falling may occur." Yippee! There's a whole laundry list of other side effects that I won't transcribe here, but the "vomit like coffee grounds, hallucinations, rainbows around lights at night, and blurred vision" sounded particularly interesting.

This also appears to be one of those medications that, once you start it, you stay on it for good. If you have to come off it, it has to be done under supervision and you're weaned off it over time. I'm not keen about that.

Nonetheless, the pain in my leg is such that I'll give this a try. Most days, walking without pain really isn't possible, and I'm beginning to have my sleep quality impacted, because there's only one or two positions where I'm comfortable in bed. The doctor is trained; I'm not.

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mother went through near the end of her life. Doctors had her on so many different medications that the interactions between them and the side effects drove her to the point of playing detective. She started doing experiments by modifying when she would take them or stopping medications altogether to see if the side effects would disappear. That is not a smart thing to do and something I do not recommend. There were times for her that the medications introduced new problems that weren't there before. Not good.

I'm supposed to take one pill at bedtime for the first 7 days, then bump it up to two pills at bedtime from there on. I'll start tomorrow (Sunday) night, that way, if I have any issues with side effects, the clinic will be open Monday to call in. I hope it does the trick for my nerve pain without making anything worse. Stay tuned.

San Diego remains on stay-at-home restrictions in response to the COVID-19 virus, but I did take my 1997 Ford F-150 pickup truck out for a spin today. It's been sitting in the garage for nearly a month, and I needed to run it to keep the battery charged. I took an hour-long ride around town and never left the vehicle, dutifully maintaining my "social isolation."

Stay healthy! Stay home!

This post originally appeared on Dan's Journey through Prostate Cancer on March 28, 2020. It is republished with permission.

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